JAMES FORBES ESQ^R F R S F A S &c

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ORIENTAL MEMOIRS:

A NARRATIVE OF

SEVENTEEN YEARS RESIDENCE IN INDIA

By JAMES FORBES, Esq. F R S,

SECOND EDITION,

REVISED BY HIS DAUGHTER,

THE COUNTESS DE MONTALEMBERT

IN TWO VOLUMES

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INTRODUCTION.

THE Correspondence from which these Memoirs are compiled, may perhaps strike the reader as being of a date not very recent: however, we must recollect that the Indian does not change: that his manners, customs, institutions, and religion are the same as in the time of Alexander, is proved from the following passage taken from this work:—

"Megasthenes, who was sent ambassador by Seleucus to Sadracottos, King of Practi, whose dominion now forms the fertile provinces of Bengal, Baher, and Oude, wrote an account of his embassy, which Arrian has preserved in his History of India, and that narrative, written two thousand years ago, when compared with the modern history of the Hindoos, convinces us how little change they had undergone during that long period, nor have the conquests and cruelties of their Mahomedan invaders, nor their commercial intercourse with the Europeans settled among them, been able to alter the long established manners and customs so deeply interwoven in their religious tenets"

It will be observed, that one of the principal objects of the author throughout these Memoirs, is to explain and reconcile from the existing manners and customs of the East, many passages of Scripture which may appear obscure or unintelligible to the European who has never visited those countries, and of which the modern sophist avails himself as an excuse for rejecting the authenticity of the sublime and consolatory truths contained in the Sacred Volumes

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF THE AUTHOR.

JAMES FORBES, Esq, Member of the Royal and Antiquarian Societies, and of the Arcadian at Rome, lineally descended from the Earls of Granard, was born in London on the 19th of May, 1749 Educated at Hadley, by the Rev. David Garrow, of whom he makes grateful and honourable mention in these Memoirs, he became, under his auspices, an excellent classic scholar, well skilled in ancient and modern history, and possessed of much general information

Before the age of sixteen he obtained the appointment of writer to Bombay. With much talent for drawing, and a great desire to explore foreign climes, he travelled during a period of nearly twenty years through different parts of Asia, Africa, and America, studying the manners and customs of the inhabitants, and delineating the natural productions of those countries, which, with the accompanying manuscripts, fill one hundred and fifty folio volumes, containing fifty-two thousand pages. His residence of four years exclusively among the Brahmins in Hindostan, gave him the opportunity of forming an intimate acquaintance with the opinions of this singular people

After having filled several important situations in different parts of India, with equal honour, talent, and integrity, Mr. Forbes returned to England in 1784, at the early age of five-and-thirty: before a longer residence in that enervating climate had destroyed a sound constitution, weakened the powers of an ardent imagination and highly cultivated mind, or deadened the enthusiasm and benevolent emotions of strong feeling He purchased an estate in the neighbourhood of London, and in 1787 married Rosée, daughter of Joseph Gaylard, Esq , by whom he had one daughter, married to the Count de Montalembert, Peer of France.

In the bosom of his family, and a numerous circle of friends by whom he was beloved and respected, Mr. Forbes devoted his leisure hours to literary pursuits. His piety was most ardent, his charity unbounded, his philanthropy universal. The susceptibility of feeling which so particularly characterized him, never produced the slightest alteration in the kindness and gentleness of his disposition, or on the warm sympathies of his nature in his domestic and social relations. On the contrary, although severe to himself in the discharge of every religious and moral duty, he was ever indulgent to the faults of others, and willing to admit of their extenuation. He had more of that Christian charity recommended by St. Peter, which suffereth long and is kind, and thinketh no evil, and of Sterne's milk of human kindness, than is generally the allotted portion of mankind , in proof of which may be adduced the tes-

timony of the proud Brahmin, the superstitious Hindoo, and the outcast Chandala, contained in a letter addressed to him by the inhabitants of Dhuboy on leaving the government of that city.* And not only the Indian during the twenty years he passed in Asia, but the European during his after residence in various parts of England and the Continent, experienced the effects of his unostentatious beneficence, especially those *who cannot dig, and to beg are ashamed.* The fatherless and the widow were the peculiar objects of his tender solicitude: indeed all the unhappy: for his heart was ever open to soothe the sorrows of suffering humanity, as his purse to relieve its wants. I trust I shall be excused for dwelling on the portrait of an honoured, and revered, and beloved parent: its features are rare as they are beautiful.

In 1796 Mr. Forbes quitted England in company with a learned and intimate friend, and travelled through Italy, Switzerland, and Germany: but being at that period unable to enter France, he with his wife and daughter, during the short peace of 1803, embarked for Holland, whence without being aware of the commencement of hostilities between England and France, he proceeded to Paris, and arrived in that capital the day after the unjust and shameful order had been issued, which constituted all English travellers and residents in the French dominions prisoners

* See p 345, vol II of this work.

of war. He shared the fate of his unfortunate countrymen, was sent to Verdun, and remained there until, at the solicitation of M. Carnot, President of the National Institute at Paris, and of Sir Joseph Banks, President of the Royal Society, he obtained his liberty, and returned to England in June 1804.

Mr. Forbes first appeared as an author by the publication of "Letters in France, written in 1803 and 1804, containing a particular description of the English at Verdun," two vols. 8vo. He afterwards published "Reflections on the Character of the Hindoos, and on the Importance of converting them to Christianity," in 8vo. 1810. His most important work is the Oriental Memoirs now offered to the public.

In 1816 he accompanied his family to Paris, where he remained two years. He again quitted England in June 1819, when he was seized with the fatal illness which terminated his exemplary life: a life which had been but a preparation for eternity. He died at Aix la Chapelle, in the arms of his daughter and her children, in August 1819, at the age of seventy.

THE

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

THESE Memoirs are founded on a series of letters, written during a long residence in India. A variety of new and interesting matter, collected from valuable and accurate resources, has induced me to alter their original form, and present them to the world in the shape of a connected narrative. I consider this explanation necessary to account for the epistolary style, occasional repetitions, and want of connexion, which will be found to pervade them.

Leaving England before I had attained my sixteenth year, and being while in India deprived of a choice of books, I lay no claim to literary merit. I am conscious of numerous defects in a work commenced at that early age, and continued for eighteen years in the India Company's service, when duty stationed me at many of their settlements, and curiosity led me to other places in the western provinces of Hindostan.

The manuscripts from which these volumes are compiled, and the drawings which illustrate them, have formed the principal recreation of my life. The pursuit beguiled the monotony of our India voyages, cheered a solitary residence at Anjengo and Dhuboy,

and softened the long period of absence from my native country: it has since mitigated the rigor of captivity, and alleviated domestic sorrow. Drawing to me had the same charm as music to the soul of harmony. In my secluded situation in Guzerat I seemed to be blest with another sense. My friends in India were happy to enlarge my collection; the sportsman suspended his career after royal game to procure me a curiosity; the Hindoo often brought a bird or an insect for delineation, knowing it would then regain its liberty; and the Brahmin supplied specimens of fruit and flowers from his sacred enclosures.

Diffident as I am of this performance, I deem myself, in some degree, pledged to publish it, in consequence of this pledge being the immediate cause of procuring the liberation of myself and family from captivity. I also assign as another reason, that some of my letters at full length, and extracts from others, have appeared in several late publications, without being ascribed to their real author.

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J B NICHOLS AND SON, 25, PARLIAMENT STREET

ORIENTAL MEMOIRS.

CHAPTER I.

The Author embarks as a Writer for Bombay—Cape de Verd Islands—Sails for the Cape of Good Hope—Coast of Brazil—Arrival at Rio de Janeiro—Humming-birds described—City of St Sebastian—Departure from South America—Tristan de Cunha—Table Land—Storms off the Cape of Good Hope—Dying Dolphin—Ship on Fire—Sea-scurvy—Funeral Ceremony at Sea—Monotony and Distress in long Calms—Malabar Coast—Settlement at Cochin—Calicut—Tellicherry—Mangalore—Goa Harbour, and City—Arrival at Bombay.

HAVING obtained the appointment of a writer in the East India Company's service at Bombay I embarked with fourteen other passengers for that settlement, in the month of March 1765, before I had attained my sixteenth year; and at that early age I commenced my descriptive letters, and the drawings which accompany them.

After encountering the boisterous seas in the Bay of Biscay, we entered the warmer latitudes, and had a distant view of the islands of Madeira, Palma, and Ferro: we next saw the peak of Teneriffe, rearing its majestic head above the clouds, and presenting a grand and magnificent scene. From thence we steered for St. Jago, the largest of the Cape de Verd islands, for

a supply of water and refreshments; and, passing by the Isles of Bona-vista, Sal, and Mayo, whose barren and rocky shores are seldom visited by strangers, we arrived at Porto Praya the middle of May: this is the principal sea-port of St. Jago; the city where the governor and bishop reside is situated at some distance inland; but there is so little attraction in the manners of the Portugueze, and so great a scarcity of horses, that the passengers do not often go there. The fortress and principal houses at Porto Praya are on a rocky eminence near the watering place; but below it is a beautiful valley, which we daily visited. Our youthful party were charmed with its novelty, and regaled on the plantains, cocoa-nuts, and pine-apples, with which it abounded. The lofty cocoa-tree, and waving plantain, were enlivened by monkeys, and a variety of birds, but the weather being extremely hot, and the hills barren, we seldom strolled beyond the limits of the valley.

We remained about a week at St. Jago, and then sailed for the Cape of Good Hope, but on discovering a dangerous leak in the ship, we were obliged to alter our course, and to proceed immediately to Rio de Janeiro, a Portugueze settlement on the coast of Brazil, where we continued from the end of June until the middle of October; while the vessel underwent the necessary repairs.

If I was pleased with St. Jago, I had much greater reason to be delighted with the Brazils: the grandeur of the mountains, the fertility of the valleys, the mildness of the climate, and the general beauty of animal and vegetable nature, render this part of South America very interesting; while the variety of trees and

plants, the profusion of fruits and flowers, and the brilliancy of the birds and insects, afforded an ample scope for my earliest attempts in natural history. One lovely valley, over which the aqueduct passes which supplies the city of St. Sebastian with water, was my favourite place of resort; there the rose and myrtle mingled their fragrance with the clustering blossoms of the citron and orange trees, bending at the same time under the weight of their golden produce.

> " For here great Spring
> Greens all the year, and fruits and blossoms blush,
> In social sweetness, on the self-same bough "
>
> MILTON

Thousands of nature's choristers, arrayed in all the brilliancy of tropical plumage, enlivened these extensive orange groves; and the humming-bird, the smallest and most lovely of the feathered race, buzzed like the bee, while sipping the nectarious dew from the blossoms and flowers. Nothing can exceed the delicacy of these little beauties; especially of that which from its minuteness is called the fly-bird; its bill and legs are not thicker than a pin; its head, tufted with glossy jet, varies with every motion into shades of green and purple; the breast is of a bright flame colour; every feather, when viewed through a microscope, appears as if fringed with silver, and spotted with gold.

The serpents in this part of South America are large and noxious, but often beautifully coloured; the town and country are infested with lizards, scorpions, centipedes, and troublesome insects of various

kinds. The wild animals generally keep upon the mountains, and leave the valleys to the cows, sheep, and goats, which were introduced into these colonies by the Portugueze.

St. Sebastian, the capital of Rio de Janeiro, is a large city, with numerous churches, convents, and nunneries; but the manners and customs of the inhabitants are neither pleasing nor interesting: pride, poverty, indolence, and superstition, are the prevailing characteristics of these degenerate Portugueze; and seem to have entirely extinguished the noble virtues of their ancestors: their cruelty to the plantation negroes, and slaves of every description, is excessive: humanity shudders at the constant smack of the whip, and the loud cries for mercy, vainly implored by these poor wretches, from their tyrannic masters, who seem to have lost every sense of that divine attribute.

The splendour of the churches, the pompous ceremonies of the Romish worship, the various dresses of the monks and nuns, and the beauty of the gardens at their convents, were all attractive. I could enlarge on these subjects, as also on the variety of the animal and vegetable productions, but I shall merely observe, that the coast abounds with excellent fish of different kinds; a profusion of fruit and vegetables supplies the public markets, and the numerous vessels which are constantly arriving in this noble harbour; beef, mutton, pork, and different kinds of poultry, are also plentiful, and at a moderate price.

The native Brazilians are seldom to be seen at Rio de Janeiro; the few who yet remain live at a distance from the Portugueze settlements; and their

manners and customs are little known. Neither could I obtain much information about the gold and diamond mines, for which Brazil is celebrated; they are in the interior mountains, far from the capital; and the roads are strictly guarded to prevent all communication. The jewellers' shops at St. Sebastian make a grand display of diamonds, topazes, amethysts, and other precious stones, brought from the mines; a great deal of gold dust is found in the beds of brooks and torrents near the mountains, and eagerly sought for, especially after heavy rains; by means of which a few of the poor African slaves have purchased their liberty, and become masters of a little plantation, where they enjoy the sweets of freedom.

We left Rio de Janeiro on the 12th of October, for the Cape of Good Hope; and about the end of the month saw Tristan de Cunha, a desolate island in the Atlantic ocean, inhabited only by seals and sea-fowl. On the 15th of November, we had a distant view of the Table mountain at the Cape, the southern boundary of Africa, and for many ages the barrier of navigators from Europe to India, until Vasco de Gama, at the conclusion of the fifteenth century, surmounted every obstacle; and his approving monarch changed its name from the Cape of Storms, to that of Good Hope.

In those seas we encountered violent tempests; and, for weeks together, passed through such foaming mountains, as baffle all description; indeed, it is difficult for a person unaccustomed to such scenes to form any idea of this immense body of water when agitated by a storm. In those southern latitudes we saw abundance of whales, grampuses, sword-fish, and porpoises;

with flocks of albatrosses, and other aquatic birds, usually met with in stormy seas; in the milder climates, the ocean was enlivened by shoals of albicores, bonitos, dolphins, sharks, and flying-fish; which amused the passing hour, furnished variety at table, and afforded me an opportunity of delineating their different characters: the remora, or sucking fish, which adheres to the body of the shark, the azure pilot-fish, which conducts him to his prey, but is never devoured himself; and the flying-fish, which by means of its long fins, wings its way through another element, and escapes its direful jaws, are all curious and beautiful; but the exquisite colouring of a dying dolphin surpasses every effort of the pencil.

We were not permitted to touch at the Cape, and therefore bore away for India. Soon after leaving the coast of Africa, we were awoke at break of day by the cry of "fire!" No situation can be more distressing; every dreadful idea which present danger suggests, or future misery anticipates, rushes on the mind; and most other trials of human fortitude appear light in the comparison: from conflagration on shore there is some prospect of escaping; and we look forward with hope to the cessation of the severest tempest; but to be in flames on the boundless ocean, is a scene fraught with horror! in momentary expectation of the powder taking fire, and blowing the vessel to atoms; or, of gradually burning to the surface of the water, and then foundering: a dreadful alternative! Providentially, we did not continue in suspense; the captain and officers acted with a calm intrepidity, and in an hour the flames were extinguished.

On our second approach to the equator, we met

with calms and contrary currents, which drove us quite out of our reckoning; fresh provisions and water became scarce, and the men were attacked by the scurvy: a distemper which was then very incidental to mariners in long voyages. It is various in its symptoms and progress; but is generally attended with heaviness, restlessness, swelled limbs, livid spots, and ulcerated gums: the last stage seems to be a total putrefaction; which soon carries off the unhappy sufferer. The scurvy baffles all the art of medicine; but if the patient is taken on shore, to breathe a pure air, and enjoy the refreshment of fruit and vegetables, he generally recovers. Before we experienced this happy change, many of the seamen, and more of the recruits for the army in India, fell a sacrifice to the malady; and we were often called upon to attend the awful ceremony of committing their remains to the deep. There is something peculiarly solemn and melancholy in a funeral of this kind, where the body is consigned to the fathomless abyss: but Faith anticipates that glorious morn, when the ransomed of the REDEEMER shall hear his voice, and the sea shall give up her dead!

Except at the funeral ceremony, which was now so frequently performed, I never had an opportunity of seeing a ship's company assembled at public worship; it is a fine spectacle; every feeling mind must rejoice to behold the deck of a large vessel covered with her crew, in the humble attitude of devotion: surrounded by the boundless ocean, the foundation of their august temple; and the cerulean expanse of heaven, its magnificent canopy! to see them in the midst of this unstable element, when separated from all their friends,

adoring the universal friend and Father of the creation; who maketh the clouds his chariot, and walketh upon the wings of the wind; who raiseth the tempest; and saith to the raging waves, "Peace! be still!" I am sorry to observe, that the solemnity of public worship is a duty too little attended to in these floating habitations, these worlds of wonder! Surely, in such a situation, it must be the highest gratification to offer the tribute of prayer and praise to the great JEHOVAH; for the sea is his, and He made it!

During the calms under the line the sea was smooth as glass; and every floating substance thrown overboard, remaining round the vessel, we were often obliged, in the cool of the evening, to lower the boats, and tow her to some distance. We continued six weeks in these sultry climates, with only now and then a light air to waft us gently on; our water also began to fail: we at last became almost spiritless from the languor occasioned by the enervating heat, and the dull uniformity of this part of our voyage.

At length, after being disappointed by many deceitful appearances of imaginary shores, and when reduced to our last cask of water, the man at the mast-head saw land, and the coast of Malabar was soon discerned through the telescopes on deck; the powers of language fail to express the joy which thrilled in our hearts at this happy prospect; those only who have been in a similar situation can conceive it: favoured by a gentle breeze, we gradually approached the cocoa-nut groves, which seemed to rise from the ocean, on the low sandy shore, near the Dutch settlement of Cochin, where we anchored in the evening. The ship was soon surrounded by boats, laden with cattle, poultry, fruit,

and vegetables: this was indeed a most grateful visit to us all: but especially to our poor invalids; who were immediately brought upon deck to enjoy the refreshing gales from the land, and partake of our delicious fare. The town of Cochin is pleasantly situated near the road, at the entrance of a broad river, surrounded by the low lands and cocoa-nut trees; beyond them are woody hills, and majestic mountains, forming a noble boundary to the landscape.

We remained only two days at Cochin, and then sailed for Bombay, aided by the land and sea winds, which alternately prevail on the Malabar coast, after the breaking-up of the south-west monsoon: the former blows fresh during great part of the night, and gradually declines a few hours after sun-rise; when the western breeze sets in from the ocean, and renders the navigation delightful. As the season advances towards the commencement of the ensuing monsoon, in the months of April and May, the north-west winds blow strong; and the ships sailing to the northward, no longer assisted by the land breezes, are obliged to stand further out to sea, to beat up against their powerful adversaries; and thus the passenger loses the beauties we daily enjoyed in this pleasant part of our voyage.

From Cochin we proceeded along a diversified coast to Calicut; the celebrated emporium where Vasco de Gama landed after his perilous voyage round the Cape of Good Hope, in the first European vessel which ever navigated the Indian seas: it was then a place of great importance, now little more than a Malabar fishing-town, with four European factories. We did not anchor at Calicut, but arrived the next day at Tellicherry, a settlement belonging to the English, in a

pleasant and healthy situation. From thence, sailing by a hilly tract of country, we came to Mangalore, then a principal sea-port of Hyder Ally Khaun; where, after procuring water and refreshments, we renewed our coasting voyage, and passing Onore, Mirjee, and some other places of little importance, we anchored in the beautiful harbour of Goa; a noble basin, surrounded by woody hills and fertile valleys, enriched by plantations of cocoa-nuts, and fields of rice: the prospect was embellished by numerous churches, convents, and villas; whose white aspect was finely contrasted with the dark mango and tamarind groves which embosomed them. This noble harbour is defended by the fortress of Alguarda: the city of Goa, founded like imperial Rome on many hills, and situated a few miles up a navigable river, presents some lovely scenery. It was the most magnificent of all the European settlements in India; and the churches, monasteries, and other public structures, indicate the former splendour of the capital of the Portugueze Asiatic establishments, the seat of the Inquisition, and the residence of the governor-general, the archbishop, judges, and other principal officers.

This was the last place we touched at on the Malabar coast, and after sailing along the mountainous shores of the Concan, we anchored in Bombay harbour, exactly eleven months from the commencement of our voyage.

CHAPTER II.

Residence at Bombay—Brief State of that Settlement in 1766—Cocoa-Nut Tree—Palmyra—Date and Banian Tree—Gymnosophists—Cubbeer—Burr—Anecdote of Monkeys—Areca—Betel, Mango, and other Fruits of Hindostan—Flowers—Vegetables—Rice-grounds—Rainy Season—Dreadful Famines in India.

A RESIDENCE of eighteen years on the island of Bombay, and several of its subordinate settlements, afforded me an opportunity of seeing a great deal of the western part of Hindostan; and I occasionally visited most of the principal places, from Ahmedabad, the capital of the northern province of Guzerat, to Anjengo, the most southern factory on the coast of Malabar.

I have already mentioned my arrival at Bombay in 1766; that establishment was then on a smaller scale than at present; especially in the military and revenue departments: the latter was always inadequate to the expenses; but the docks, fortifications, magazines, and storehouses, render it an object of national importance, both in a political and commercial point of view: the harbour is one of the finest in the world, accessible at all seasons, and affording a safe anchorage during the most tempestuous monsoons: the merchants carry on a trade with all the principal sea-ports and interior cities of the peninsula of India; and extend their commerce to the Persian and Arabian gulphs, the coast of Africa, Malacca, China, and the eastern islands.

Bombay is situated in the latitude of 18° 50′ north,

and 73° of east longitude from London: the island does not exceed twenty miles in circumference: and being entirely surrounded by the sea, the heat is seldom oppressive, the climate in general healthy and pleasant, and the inhabitants are strangers to the hot winds so troublesome on the continent. The surface of the soil is very unequal, consisting of rocks, hills, and plains; except in one part, where a very considerable tract is overflowed by the encroachment of the sea, notwithstanding a strong wall which was erected at a great expense to prevent it.

From being situated only a few miles from the Mahratta shores, and still nearer the fertile island of Salsette, the markets are daily supplied from thence with all the necessaries of life: for so circumscribed, so rocky, and so unequal is the surface of Bombay itself, that it only produces a sufficiency of grain in one year, to supply its population for six weeks. Yet each spot that will admit of cultivation, and is not occupied by houses, is sown with rice, or planted with cocoa-nut trees, which, in extensive woods, lend their friendly shade to thousands of neat cottages, and form delightful rides, impervious to a tropical sun.

Of all the gifts which Providence has bestowed on the oriental world, the cocoa-nut tree most deserves our notice. In this single production of nature, what blessings are conveyed to man! It grows in a stately column, from thirty to fifty feet in height, crowned by a verdant capital of waving branches, covered with long spiral leaves; under this foliage, bunches of blossoms, clusters of green fruit, and others arrived at maturity, appear in mingled beauty. The trunk, though porous, furnishes beams and rafters for our

habitations; and the leaves, when platted together, make an excellent thatch, common umbrellas, coarse mats for the floor, and brooms; while their finest fibres are woven into very beautiful mats for the rich. The covering of the young fruit is extremely curious, resembling a piece of thick cloth, in a conical form, close and firm as if it came from the loom; it expands after the fruit has burst through its inclosure, and then appears of a coarser texture. The nuts contain a delicious milk, and a kernel, sweet as the almond: this, when dried, affords abundance of oil; and when that is expressed, the remains feed cattle and poultry, and make a good manure. The shell of the nut furnishes cups, ladles, and other domestic utensils; while the husk which encloses it is of the utmost importance: it is manufactured into ropes, and cordage of every kind, from the smallest twine to the largest cable, which are far more durable than those of hemp. In the Nicobar islands, the natives build their vessels, make the sails and cordage, supply them with provisions and necessaries, and provide a cargo of arrack, vinegar, oil, jaggree, (a wholesome and nourishing coarse sugar,) cocoa-nuts, coir, cordage, black paint, and several inferior articles for foreign markets, entirely from this tree. Gibbon, the historian, writing of the palm tree, adds, that the Asiatics celebrated, either in verse or prose, the three hundred and sixty uses to which the trunk, the branches, the leaves, the juice, and the fruit, were skilfully applied.

Many of the trees are not permitted to bear fruit; but the embryo bud, from which the blossoms and nuts would spring, is tied up, to prevent its expansion; and a small incision being then made at the end, there

oozes in gentle drops a cool pleasant liquor, called Tarce, or Toddy; the palm-wine of the poets. This, when first drawn, is cooling and salutary; but when fermented and distilled, produces an intoxicating spirit. Thus, a plantation of cocoa-nut trees yields the proprietor a considerable profit, and generally forms part of the government revenue.

The cocoa-nut tree delights in a flat sandy soil, near the sea, and must be frequently watered; while the palmyras, or brab trees, grow on hills and rocky mountains. These also abound on our small island, as well as the date tree; but the fruit of the latter seldom attains perfection. These trees are of the same genus, though differing according to their respective classes; they all produce the palm-wine, and are generally included under the name of palms, or palmetos: their leaves are used instead of paper, by the natives on the Malabar coast, and the inhabitants of the Carnatic.

> "Stretch'd amid these orchards of the sun,
> Where high palmetos lift their grateful shade,
> Give me to drain the cocoa's milky bowl,
> And from the palm to draw its freshening wine,
> More bounteous far than all the frantic juice
> Which Bacchus pours!"

The banian, or burr tree (Ficus Indica, Lin.) is equally deserving our attention: from being one of the most curious and beautiful of nature's productions in that genial climate, where she sports with so much profusion and variety. Each tree is in itself a grove, and some of them are of an amazing size; as they are continually increasing, and, contrary to most other animal and vegetable productions, seem to be exempted from decay: for every branch from

the main body throws out its own roots, at first in small tender fibres, several yards from the ground, which continually grow thicker; until, by a gradual descent they reach its surface; where striking in, they increase to a large trunk, and become a parent tree, throwing out new branches from the top. These in time suspend their roots, and receiving nourishment from the earth, swell into trunks, and shoot forth other branches; thus continuing in a state of progression so long as the first parent of them all supplies her sustenance.

A banian tree, with many trunks, forms the most beautiful walks, vistas, and cool recesses, that can be imagined. The leaves are large, soft, and of a lively green; the fruit is a small fig, when ripe of a bright scarlet; affording sustenance to monkeys, squirrels, peacocks, and birds of various kinds, which dwell among the branches.

The Hindoos are peculiarly fond of this tree; they consider its long duration, its out-stretching arms, and over-shadowing beneficence, as emblems of the Deity, and almost pay it divine honours. The Brahmins, who thus "find a fane in every sacred grove," spend much of their time in religious solitude under the shade of the banian tree; they plant it near the dewals, or Hindoo temples, improperly called Pagodas; and in those villages where there is no structure for public worship, they place an image under one of these trees, and there perform a morning and evening sacrifice.

These are the trees under which a sect of naked philosophers, called Gymnosophists, assembled in Arrian's days; and this historian of ancient Greece gives us a true picture of the modern Hindoos: "In winter

the Gymnosophists enjoy the benefit of the sun's rays in the open air; and in summer, when the heat becomes excessive, they pass their time in cool and moist places, under large trees; which, according to the accounts of Nearchus, cover a circumference of five acres, and extend their branches so far, that ten thousand men may easily find shelter under them."

There are none of this magnitude at Bombay; but on the banks of the Nerbudda, I have spent many delightful days with large parties, on rural excursions, under a tree supposed by some persons to be that described by Nearchus, and certainly not at all inferior to it. High floods have at various times swept away a considerable part of this extraordinary tree; but what still remains is near two thousand feet in circumference, measured round the principal stems; the over-hanging branches, not yet struck down, cover a much larger space, and under it grow a number of custard-apple, and other fruit trees. The large trunks of this single tree amount to three hundred and fifty, and the smaller ones exceed three thousand: each of these is constantly sending forth branches and hanging roots, to form other trunks, and become the parents of a future progeny.

This magnificent pavilion affords a shelter to all travellers, particularly to the religious tribes of Hindoos; and is generally filled with a variety of birds, snakes, and monkeys: the latter have often diverted me with their antic tricks; especially in their parental affection to their young offspring; by teaching them to select their food, to exert themselves, in jumping from bough to bough, and then in taking more extensive leaps from tree to tree; encouraging them by

caresses when timorous, and menacing, and even beating them, when refractory. Knowing by instinct the malignity of the snakes, they are most vigilant in their destruction: they seize them when asleep by the neck, and running to the nearest flat stone, grind down the head by a strong friction on the surface, frequently looking at it, and grinning at their progress. When convinced that the venomous fangs are destroyed, they toss the reptile to their young ones to play with, and seem to rejoice in the destruction of the common enemy.

On a shooting party under this tree, one of my friends killed a female monkey, and carried it to his tent; which was soon surrounded by forty or fifty of the tribe, who, making a great noise, advanced towards it in a menacing posture: on presenting his fowling-piece, they retreated, and appeared irresolute, but one, which from his age and station in the van, seemed the head of the troop, stood his ground, chattering and menacing in a furious manner, nor could any efforts less cruel than firing drive him off: he at length approached the tent door; when finding his threatenings were of no avail, he began a lamentable moaning, and by every token of grief and supplication, seemed to beg the body of the deceased: on this, it was given to him: with tender sorrow he took it up in his arms, embraced it with conjugal affection, and carried it off with a sort of triumph to his expecting comrades. The artless behaviour of this poor animal wrought so powerfully on the sportsmen, that they resolved never more to level a gun at one of the monkey race.

The banian tree I am now describing, is called by the Hindoos cubbeer-burr, in memory of a favourite

saint, and was much resorted to by the English gentlemen from Baroche, which was then a flourishing chiefship, on the banks of the Nerbuddah, about ten miles from this celebrated tree The chief was extremely fond of field diversions, and used to encamp under it in a magnificent style, having a saloon, dining-room, drawing-room, bed-chambers, bath, kitchen, and every other accommodation, all in separate tents, yet did this noble tree cover the whole, together with his carriages, horses, camels, guards, and attendants. While its spreading branches afforded shady spots for the tents of his friends, with their servants and cattle. And in the march of an army, it has been known to shelter seven thousand men

Such is the banian tree, the pride of Hindostan, which Milton has thus discriminately and poetically introduced into his Paradise Lost.

"Then both together went
Into the thickest wood, there soon they chose
The fig-tree Not that tree for fruit renown'd,
But such, and at this day to Indians known
In Malabar or Deccan, spreads her arms,
Branching so broad and long, that in the ground
The bended twigs take root, and daughters grow
About the mother tree, a pillar'd shade
High over-arch'd, and echoing walks between
There oft the Indian herdsman shunning heat,
Shelters in cool, and tends his pasturing herds,
At loop-holes cut through thickest shade"

The areca, or betel-nut tree, (the areca catechu, Linn.) is one of the most beautiful of the palmyra tribe; it grows perfectly straight, with an elegant tuft of plumy branches on its summit, overshadowing the blossoms and fruit which are interspersed among them: there

is a peculiar delicacy in the proportion and foliage of this tree, which makes it generally admired. the Indians compare it to an elegantly formed and beautiful woman; and there is the same allusion in Solomon's Song, "How fair, and how pleasant art thou, O my love, for delights! This thy stature is like to a palm tree" C vii v 6, 7.

The betel-nut, better known by the name of sooparee, is in appearance like a large nutmeg, enclosed in a thick membraneous covering, and is highly esteemed by the Indians of all descriptions as a fine stomachic, and a preservative of the teeth and gums· they cut it into small pieces, and eat it with a hot pungent leaf, called betel, spread over with chunam, or delicate shell lime; which the natives carry in boxes, like tobacco, and chew it at all hours. The betel is also introduced at visits of ceremony, when the nut is cut into slices, mixed with cardamoms and chunam, and folded up in a betel-leaf, fastened by a clove· these are presented on a salver to each guest at the conclusion of a visit, and is generally an indication to take leave. The betel-leaf, properly so called (piper betle, Linn.) is a plant entirely distinct and separate from the areca, or betel-nut tree, and grows in neat regular plantations, like hop-grounds, creeping up the small poles prepared for their protection.

The groves and gardens on Bombay and the adjacent continent, supply the inhabitants with guavas, plaintains, bananas, custard apples, jacas, tamarinds, cashew-apples, ananas, jamboos, oranges, limes, citrons, grapes, and pomegranates: but the most useful, plentiful, and best fruit, is the mango (mangifera, Linn.) which grows abundantly all over Hindostan, even in the

forests and hedge-rows, on trees equal in size to a large English oak, but in appearance and foliage more resembling the Spanish-chesnut: this valuable fruit varies in shape, colour, and flavour, as much as apples do in Europe: the superior kinds are extremely delicious; and in the interior resemble the large yellow peach at Venice, heightened by the flavour of the orange and anana: and so plentiful are mangos, in the hot season, throughout most parts of India, that during my residence in Guzerat, they were sold in the public markets for one rupee the culsey, or six hundred pounds in English weight for half a crown: they are a delicacy to the rich, and a nutritious diet for the poor, who in the mango season require but little other sustenance.

The anana, dignified by Thomson as the "pride of vegetable life," needs no description, nor have I ever tasted pine-apples of a superior flavour in the torrid zone, to some produced in the English conservatories The custard apples, of two kinds, are pleasant fruits. the pompelmose, or shaddock (malus aurantia, Indica,) is much larger and more esteemed than the orange: the jaca (artocarpus integrifolia, Linn) is of a prodigious size, growing from the trunk and large branches of the tree; the fruit is luscious, and of a powerful smell, with a seed resembling the chesnut: the guava (psidium, Linn) shaped like a pear, has something of the strawberry flavour: some of the jamboos are palatable, and that species called the jambo-rosa, or rose apple, has the scent and taste of the rose The carambola, bilimbing, corinda, halfaluree, and some of the smaller fruits, are pleasant, particularly in tarts and preserves

Hindostan is celebrated for a variety of flowers and odoriferous plants, much esteemed by the Asiatic ladies, but generally too powerful for Europeans The champach (michelia champaca, Linn.) which resembles the magnolia glauca, and whose blossoms perfume the air to a great extent, is the most highly prized The mogree, keurah, oleander hinna, and several others, whose oriental names and characters it would be uninteresting to detail; together with myrtles, jasmins, and a few Chinese flowers, flourish in the Indian gardens; but two of their principal ornaments are the tube rose and mhadavi (ipomœa, Linn) the former, both double and single, are extremely luxuriant; and from their alluring fragrance in the cool of the evening, are called by the Malays, soondul mullam, the intriguer of the night. The mhadavi is a most beautiful creeper, covering our seats and arbours with a small monopetalous flower, divided into five angular segments, like fine crimson velvet, surrounded by a foliage uncommonly delicate; it is introduced in the Hindoo drama of Sacontala, translated by Sir William Jones, with the blooming patalis, the balmy usira, and other flowers highly prized by the Hindoo females How beautiful is the apostrophe of Sacontala to this her favorite plant, when about to leave the sacred groves, where she had spent her early days in innocence and peace "O mhadavi! thou lovely creeper, whose red blossoms inflame the grove! O, most radiant of shining plants, receive my embraces, and return them with thy flexible arms! I must, from this day, leave thee! O my beloved father, consider this creeper as myself!"

The double and single Japan-rose (hibiscus rosa

sinensis, Linn) form excellent garden hedges, and the rich crimson of the flowers, contrasted with the vivid verdure of the leaves, add much to our hortensial beauty. but, from being almost scentless, they are less esteemed than the henna, or mendey (lawsonia spinosa, Linn) which makes as fine a fence, and perfumes the air with a delicious fragrance, few shrubs are more esteemed throughout India, Persia, and Arabia, than the henna The hibiscus mutabilis, or changeable-rose, in its three varities, of white, rose-colour, and crimson, all blowing at one time on the same plant, is a pretty object in an oriental garden.

Bombay abounds with excellent vegetables, indigenous to the climate, and is not unfavourable to cabbages, lettuce, potatoes, and several others, introduced from Europe and the Cape of Good Hope The banda (hibiscus esculentus, Linn) is a nutritious oriental vegetable, so is the bungal, or egg-plant (solanum melongena, Linn.) which grows to a much larger size than in Europe, the yam (dioscorea, Linn): with the fenugreek (mei trigonella fœnum-græcum, Linn), the sweet potato, and a variety of calavances, or Indian beans, are much liked at the English tables. The Chili pepper (capsicum), of various sorts, is planted throughout Hindostan, and forms a principal ingredient in curries, and other savory dishes, which the natives are all fond of, whether they eat animal food or not: to the capsicum they generally add the cardamom (amomum repens, Linn) a pleasant spice from the Malabar coast, which, with salt, pepper, and ginger, season their viands, mingle in small quantities with the rice, which is the chief article of food among all the higher classes of Indians: the poor

live principally upon juarree (holcus sorghum), bajaree (holcus spicatus), and other inferior grains

The rice, or batty, is sown in June, at the commencement of the periodical rains, which continue, more or less, until October, when the harvest begins. The rice grounds are enclosed with mounds of earth, and contain a great deal of water, for rice will not grow in a dry soil, and as it always rises with the water, in Pegu, and some other countries, the harvest is reaped in boats, and many low lands which can be artificially watered, produce two crops of rice in a year, with the addition of a little manure.

During the rainy season, and for a few weeks afterwards, the country in Hindostan is delightful, nothing can exceed its verdure, and general beauty, but the fervour of a tropical sun soon clothes the earth with a russet hue, which continues until the annual fall of rain; in that long interval of eight months not a single shower falls, and the nightly dews, though copious, are insufficient to preserve the grass: yet most of the trees, as in other tropical climates, are ever greens.

In the temperate climes of Europe, it is difficult to conceive the force and beauty of the eastern language respecting fertilizing streams and refreshing showers: it is not so with the inhabitants of the torrid zone, who look forward with eager expectation to the setting in of the rainy season, when cultivation commences, the seed is sown, and a joyful harvest anticipated. Should these periodical rains be withheld, when the heavens are "as brass, and the earth as iron," (Deut. xxviii. v. 23.) the consequences would be fatal. Famine and pestilence, with all their dire attendants, stalk through the land, and spread destruc-

tion and despair on every side: as those can testify who beheld the dreadful scenes at Bengal in the year 1770; and others, who have witnessed the sad effects of a failure of the crops in different parts of Hindostan; where thousands are carried off by famine and, from being deprived of sepulture or cremation, the atmosphere is rendered pestilential.

What renders the privation of rain at the expected season more dreadful on the continent, is the effect of the winds which then generally prevail, especially at a distance from the sea. they are very little known at Bombay: in the northern provinces of Hindostan, and in the Carnatic, they are felt more or less in the best constructed houses; but are most distressing to travellers from milder climates, when passing through a country where no caravansera, tent, or friendly banian-tree, affords a shelter, the greatest alleviation is a house with thick walls, to resist the heat, and every door and window shut to exclude the air; or if open, to have screens of matted grass hanging before them, kept constantly watered. When these winds prevail, furniture of wood, glass, porcelaine, and metal, exposed to their blasts, although perfectly shaded from the sun, are as hot as if they had been placed before a fierce fire: at the same time, water in guglets from Persia, and jars of porous earth, hung up in the current of wind, is refreshingly cold; and wine, beer, and other liquors, in a cotton wrapper, constantly wetted, exposed in the same manner, a short time before they are brought to the table, are like iced wines in Europe.

As a contrast to the violence of the monsoon, and the unpleasant effects of the hot winds, there is some-

times a voluptuousness in the climate of India, a stillness in nature, an indescribable softness, which soothes the mind, and gives it up to the most delightful sensations: independent of the effects of opium, champoing, and other luxuries, so much indulged in by the oriental sensualist!

CHAPTER III.

Mus-malabaricus—Musk-rat—Ants—Termites—Lizards—Guana Serpents—Cobra Minelle—Cobra de Capello—Dancing-snakes—Fatal effect of the poison of the Hooded Snake—Dr Russell on the Indian Serpents—Insects of India—Locusts—Wild Honey—Ghee—Birds of Hindostan—The Myneh—Baya, or bottle-nested Sparrow—Tailor-bird—Bulbul, or Indian Nightingale—Persian Ode—Fish at Bombay

THE small island of Bombay does not afford the variety of animated nature found on the adjacent continent: which abounds with tigers, leopards, wild-hogs, antelopes, deer of many kinds, hares, rabbits, and smaller animals, the elephant and the rhinoceros are common in several parts of India Armadillos, hyenas, porcupines, and others of less note, are to be seen in most places, but jackals, squirrels, and hedgehogs, are the only wild animals on Bombay.

The mus malabaricus, or bandicoote rat, frequently undermine warehouses, and destroy every kind of merchandize, so that they are a dangerous enemy. The musk-rats, though small, are nearly as destructive, and have a most disagreeable smell; if one of these vermin gets into a chest of wine, every bottle it passes over smells so strong of the animal, and acquires such a disagreeable flavour, that it cannot be drank.

Nor are the ants less obnoxious, they vary in shape, size, and colour, the largest are black, near an inch long, and of great strength, their bite is painful, and blood frequently follows the wound. They march in large armies, and exact heavy contributions, particularly on sugar and preserves, though few eatables come amiss, and in a few hours they commit terrible depredations But the termites, or white ants, make still greater havoc; they gnaw through the thickest planks, demolish beams and rafters, and entirely destroy books, papers, and bales of goods, whichth ey perforate in a thousand places. These, at a certain season, quit their reptile state, and become a winged insect.

Lizards abound in the houses, fields, and gardens, they are a harmless race, differing in size, form, and colour, and some, like the chamelion, assume different hues. The alligator, which in all respects resembles the Egyptian crocodile, is a terrible animal, seldom seen on Bombay, but they are found in most of the rivers on the continent from five to twenty feet in length. The guana, a land animal of the lacerta tribe, is the next in size, though seldom exceeding four feet; its colour is a dirty green, and the skin covered with scales, some of the natives eat the flesh, and consider it a dainty, others use it in medicine as a great restorative India, like most other countries between the tropics, is infested by serpents, scorpions, centipedes, and noxious reptiles of various kinds

Among the serpents of India the cobra-minelle is the smallest, and most dangerous; the bite occasions a speedy and painful death. They are of a brown colour, speckled with black and white, though at a distance not easily distinguished from the ground on which they move, and happy would it be if they con-

fined themselves to it; but they enter the houses, and creep upon the beds and chairs; I once found four, and at another time five, in my chamber up stairs.

The cobra de capello, or hooded-snake (coluber naja), called by the Indians the naag, or nagao, is a large and beautiful serpent; but one of the most venomous of all the coluber class, its bite generally proves mortal in less than an hour. It is called the hooded snake, from having a curious hood near the head, which it contracts or enlarges at pleasure; this faculty is occasioned by the length of the long legs proceeding from the vertebræ in that part, and which assisted by proper muscles, enable the snake to extend the skin of the neck to a large flattened surface or hood. The centre of this hood is marked in black and white like a pair of spectacles, from whence it is also named the spectacle-snake.

Of this genus are the dancing-snakes, which are carried in baskets throughout Hindostan, and procure a maintenance for a set of people, who play a few simple notes on the flute, with which the snakes seem much delighted, and keep time by a graceful motion of the head; erecting about half their length from the ground, and following the music with gentle curves, like the undulating lines of a swan's neck. It is a well-attested fact, that when a house is infested with these snakes, and some others of the coluber genus, which destroy poultry and small domestic animals, as also by the larger serpents of the boa tribe, the musicians are sent for; who by playing on a flagelet, find out their hiding-places, and charm them to destruction; for no sooner do the snakes hear the music, than they come softly from their retreat, and

are easily taken. I imagine these musical snakes were known in Palestine, from the Psalmist comparing the ungodly to the deaf adder, which stoppeth her ears, and refuseth to hear the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely. Psalm lviii v. 4, 5.

When the music ceases the snakes appear motionless; but if not immediately covered up in the basket, the spectators are liable to fatal accidents. Among my drawings is that of a cobra de capello, which danced for an hour on the table while I painted it; I frequently handled it, to observe the beauty of the spots, and especially the spectacles on the hood, not doubting but that its venomous fangs had been previously extracted. But the next morning my upper servant, who was a zealous Mussulman, came to me in great haste, and desired I would instantly retire, and praise the Almighty for my good fortune: not understanding his meaning, I told him that I had already performed my devotions, and had not so many stated prayers as the followers of his prophet. Mahomet then informed me, that while purchasing some fruit in the bazaar, he observed the man who had been with me on the preceding evening, entertaining the country people with his dancing snakes, they, according to their usual custom, sat on the ground around him; when, either from the music stopping too suddenly, or from some other cause irritating the vicious reptile which I had so often handled, it darted at the throat of a young woman, and inflicted a wound of which she died in about half an hour. Mahomet repeated his advice for praise and thanksgiving to Alla, and recorded me in his calendar as a lucky man.

Dr Russell, in his valuable treatise on Indian ser-

pents, has distinguished between the venomous and the harmless species, in the three genera of boa, coluber, and anguis: he has given an accurate description, and coloured engravings of forty-three of the most common serpents in Hindostan, experiments on the effects of their bite, and the several remedies applied, with observations on the apparatus provided by nature, for preparing and instilling their poison: he mentions, that a quantity of warm Madeira wine taken internally, with an outward application of eau-de-luce on the punctures, was generally successful in curing the bite of the most venomous species: and that the medicine called the Tanjore-pill seemed to be equally efficacious. Dr. Russell further observes, that "of forty-three serpents examined and described by him, seven only were found with poisonous organs: and upon comparing the effects of the poison of five oriental serpents on brute animals, with those produced by the poison of the rattle-snake, and the European viper, it may in general be remarked, that they all produce morbid symptoms nearly similar; however much they may differ in the degree of their deleterious power, or in the rapidity of its operation. The bite of a rattle-snake in England, killed a dog in two minutes, the bite of the most pernicious snake in India was never observed to kill a dog in less than twenty-seven minutes"

It would be entering on too extensive a field to describe the character and beauty of the papilios, libellulæ, scarabei, cicadæ, cantharides, and other insects, which animate the Indian groves and gardens throughout the day: and are succeeded by a variety of moths, and nocturnal visitors, but especially the lampyris,

or fire-flies, which glitter by thousands in the dark recesses of the banian-tree; and in perpetual motion on the external branches of the spreading tamarind, produce a singular and brilliant effect The locusts, which are so much dreaded in many parts of Hindostan, are seldom seen on Bombay: but the creeping-leaf, and some others of the mantis class, are extremely curious

India also abounds with wasps and bees; the latter build their nests in rocky caverns and hollow trees, and produce plenty of wax and honey; but the best is brought from Muscat, and different parts of Arabia The bees are sometimes very troublesome and dangerous, and often annoyed us in our visits to the caves at Salsette and the Elephanta; where they make their combs in the clefts of the rocks, and in the recesses among the figures, and hang in immense clusters: I have known a whole party put to the rout in the caverns of Salsette, and obliged to return with their curiosity unsatisfied, from having imprudently fired a gun to disperse the bees, who in their rage pursued them to the bottom of the mountains.

I am surprized that commentators on the scriptures have perplexed themselves about the food of John the Baptist in the wilderness; which we are informed consisted of locusts and wild honey, and for which the cassia-fistula, or locust-tree, and many other substitutes, have been mentioned: but it is well known that locusts are an article of food in Persia and Arabia, at the present day, they are fried until their wings and legs fall off, and in that state are sold in the markets, and eaten with rice and dates, sometimes flavoured with salt and spices· and the wild honey

is found in the clefts of the rocks in Judea, as abundantly as in the caves of Hindostan.

We often read in Scripture of the butter of kine, the milk of sheep, and the fat of the kidneys of wheat; with the pure blood of the grape, and honey out of the rock: "He should have fed them also with the finest of the wheat, and with honey out of the stony rock would I have satisfied thee." Psalm lxxxi. v. 16. There can be as little doubt what that honey was, as of the wild honey on which the Baptist fed in the wilderness; some of the greatest delicacies in India are now made from the rolong-flour, which is called the heart, or kidney of the wheat: and most probably the brooks of honey and butter, mentioned by Zophar, in the book of Job, were the liquid honey from the wild bees; and the clarified butter, or ghee, used throughout Hindostan, which pours like oil out of the duppers, or immense leather bottles in which it is transported, as an article of commerce; and is every where preferred by the natives to butter not so prepared.

The continental woods are enlivened with peacocks, partridges, quails, green-pigeons, and other birds of brilliant plumage and excellent flavour; but under my present limitation, I can only describe a small part of Indian ornithology. Vultures, kites, hawks, crows, and a variety of smaller birds, abound in Bombay; and amadavads, and other songsters, are brought thither from Surat, and different countries.

The myneh is a very entertaining bird, hopping about the house, and articulating several words in the manner of the starling; and frequently repeating its own name of myneh; the sharukh, a bird of the same kind, I am not so well acquainted with, but it is said to imitate the human voice in a wonderful manner.

The baya, or bottle-nested sparrow, is remarkable for its pendent nest, brilliant plumage, and uncommon sagacity. These birds are found in most parts of Hindostan; in shape they resemble the sparrow, as also in the brown feathers of the back and wings; the head and breast are of a bright yellow, and in the rays of a tropical sun have a splendid appearance, when flying by thousands in the same grove; they make a chirping noise, but have no song: they associate in large communities; and cover extensive clumps of palmyras, acacias, and date trees, with their nests. These are formed in a very ingenious manner, by long grass woven together in the shape of a bottle, with the neck hanging downwards, and suspended by the other end to the extremity of a flexible branch, the more effectually to secure the eggs and young brood from serpents, monkeys, squirrels, their most deadly enemy, and from birds of prey. These nests contain several apartments, appropriated to different purposes: in one the hen performs the office of incubation; another, consisting of a little thatched roof, and covering a perch, without a bottom, is occupied by the male, who with his chirping note cheers the female during her maternal duties. The Hindoos are very fond of these birds, for their docility and sagacity: when young they teach them to fetch and carry; and at the time the young women resort to the public fountains, their lovers instruct the baya to pluck the tica, or golden ornament, from the forehead of their favourite, and bring it to their expecting master.

Equally curious in the structure of its nest, and far superior in the variety and elegance of its plumage, is the tailor-bird of Hindostan; so called from its in-

stinctive ingenuity in forming its nest: it first selects a plant with large leaves, and then gathers cotton from the shrub, spins it to a thread by means of its long bill and slender feet, and then, as with a needle, sows the leaves neatly together to conceal its nest. The tailor-bird (motacilla sutoria, Linn.) resembles some of the humming-birds at the Brazils, in shape and colour: the hen is clothed in brown; but the plumage of the cock displays the varied tints of azure, purple, green, and gold, so common in those American beauties. Often have I watched the progress of an industrious pair of tailor-birds in my garden, from their first choice of a plant, until the completion of the nest, and the enlargement of their young.

The bulbul, or Persian nightingale, also called hazardasitaun, or the "bird of a thousand songs," is a great favourite with the orientals: its plumage is variegated by shades of brown and white, with a black tuft upon the head, and some feathers of a bright scarlet near the tail: it has a pleasing wild note, but I never heard one that possessed the charming variety of the English nightingale, or serenaded us with its nocturnal melody: whether the Indian bulbul and that of Iran entirely correspond, I have some doubts: the Persian bulbul is celebrated by Hafiz and Khusroo, not only for the plaintive sweetness of its song, but for its passion for the rose; as they allege, it is so enamoured with that flower, that if it sees any person pluck a rose from the tree, it laments and cries. I drew a bulbul fluttering over a full-blown rose, as a vignette to a Persian ode, translated by Colonel Woodburne, who presented me with the following copy, which has not before appeared in print.

ON THE ABSENCE OF HIS MISTRESS

Translated from the Persian of Amir Khusroo

How, sweet nymph, shall I be gay,
Though it be the month of May?
Banish'd from the flower of spring,
How shall the mournful bulbul sing?

Joy, that once inspir'd my lay,
Joy and hope have fled away
Plaintive notes must tell my woes
In the absence of the rose!

Looks, the language of the eyes,
Tears may speak, and so may sighs,
But the muse must lend her aid
To describe my lovely maid.

Limner, would you paint her fair,
Mark her mien, her gait, her air,
Mark the mischief of her eye,
Where the loves in ambush lie:

Shew the sense, the ease, the grace,
In each feature of her face,
Every feeling of the mind,
Fond, affectionate, refin'd!

Heavens! how *swift* our joys are past!
Joys which heav'n might wish to last!
Fancy, bring me back her charms,
Bring them quickly to my arms.

Haste upon the morning gale,
To tell her all my mournful tale,
Tell her how my bosom burns,
How it bleeds till she returns.

Ah! how happy once, and blest,
Panting near thy spotless breast,
Drinking poison from that eye,
Breathing soft the mutual sigh!

Now complaining, now content,
Free from every false restraint;
Pleas'd we spend each happy hour,
Under love's auspicious power.

Shall ambition, wealth, or pride,
Lead me from thy path aside?
No—sweet sovereign of my breast,
Love alone shall make us blest!

Khusroo, cease thy artless strain,
Nor suppose the numbers vain,
If these pearls at random flung,
Please the nymphs for whom they're strung

The metaphor of stringing the pearls at the conclusion of these stanzas, is a poetical idea, common in the Persian language; and frequently to be met with in the beautiful odes of Hafiz.

Having limited myself so much in the pleasing walk of oriental ornithology, I shall be very brief in its icthyology: the surrounding ocean supplies Bombay with a variety of excellent fish; some of them are similar to those in Europe, others are peculiar to India. The pomfret is not unlike a small turbot, but of a more delicate flavour; and epicures esteem the black pomfret a great dainty: the sable, or salmon-fish, a little resembles the European fish from whence it is named: the robal, the seir-fish, the grey mullet, and some others, are very good; but the bumbalo, a small fish, extremely nutritive, and caught in immense numbers, is the favourite with those natives who are

allowed by their religion to eat fish: they are dried for home consumption, and furnish a principal article of food for the Lascars, or Indian sailors, on board their vessels; they are also a considerable article of commerce in their dried state. Turtle are sometimes caught at Bombay and the adjacent islands; as are sea cray-fish, oysters, limpets, and other shell fish.

CHAPTER IV.

Inhabitants of Bombay—Origin of the Hindoos—The Brahmins—The Hindoo Religion—Extracts from the Vedas—Menu's Code of Laws—Brama, or the Supreme Deity—Devotion of the Hindoos—Fakeers, or Yogees—Religious Devotee—Life of the Brahmins—Candalahs, or Pariars—Dress of the Hindoo Tribes—Hindoo Women—Education—Early Marriages—Burning the Dead—Astrology and Augury—Rebekah at the Well—The Palankeen—Dancing Girls—Ablutions—Hummums—Effects of Opium—Halcarras.

HAVING briefly mentioned the animal and vegetable productions of Bombay, I shall proceed to describe its inhabitants, commencing with the Hindoos, the aborigines of Hindostan. From the northern mountains of Thibet and Tartary, to the southern promontory of Cape Comorin, and from the western shores of the Indus to the eastern banks of the Ganges, extended the boundaries of the vast empire of the ancient Hindoos; a country comprising nearly as much land as half the continent of Europe, and containing about seventy millions of inhabitants.

The Persians gave it the name of Hindustan, from being the country of the Hindus, or Hindoos; but in more early ages it was called by themselves Bharata, and sometimes Punyabhumi, or the land of virtues: a name expressive of the gentle government, and

flourishing condition of a mild and happy people. The Greeks derive the name of India, which has been so generally adopted, from the Persian appellation; and in modern times, India has been used as a general name, not only for the extensive region above-mentioned, but the still more eastern tracts of country, with the island of Ceylon, and those in the oriental archipelago. Sir William Jones traces the foundation of the Indian empire above 3,800 years from the present time; the highest age of the Yajur Veda to 1,580 years before the birth of Christ, or 100 years before the birth of Moses; and the highest age of the Institutes of Menu to 1,280 years before the birth of our Saviour.

The origin of the Hindoos, like that of most other nations, buried in obscurity, and lost in fable, has baffled the researches of the ablest investigators. Megasthenes, who was sent ambassador by Seleucus, to Sandracottos, king of Practri, whose dominion now forms the fertile provinces of Bengal, Bahar, and Oude, wrote an account of his embassy, which Arrian has preserved in his history of India; and that narrative, written two thousand years ago, when compared with the modern history of the Hindoos, convinces us how little change they have undergone in that long period: nor have the conquests and cruelties of their Mahomedan invaders, nor their commercial intercourse with the Europeans settled among them, been able to alter the long established manners and customs, so deeply interwoven with their religious tenets.

The Hindoos are divided into four principal tribes, proceeding from Brama, the creating power, in the following manner: the Brahmin, issuing from the mouth,

implying wisdom, to pray, to read, and to instruct; the Cshatriya, or Ketterree, proceeding from the arms, implying strength to draw the bow, to fight, and to govern; the Bhyse, coming from the belly or thighs, which implies nourishment; these must provide the necessaries of life by agriculture and commerce; and the Sooder, coming from the feet, which means subjection; these are born to labour and to serve: and these chief tribes, or castles, are distinguished as the followers of Vishnoo, and Seeva; called Vishnoo-bukht, and Seeva-bukht.

The Brahmins study religion, astronomy, arts and sciences: they are the instructors of youth, take care of the dewals, or temples, and perform every kind of charity. The Cshatriya tribe includes kings, nobles, magistrates, officers, and the superior orders of mankind. The Vursya, or Bhyse, are employed in commerce, agriculture, arms, and the occupation of shepherds and herdsmen. The Sudra, or Sooder, consists of manufacturers, mechanics, servants, and all the lower classes of society. Each of these principal tribes is subdivided into a number of classes, or castes, amounting in all to eighty-four; who neither intermarry, nor intimately associate with each other. So that each caste differs in features, dress, and appearance, as much as if they were of different nations, and by laws most strictly observed, they are separated from each other by insurmountable barriers.

The Brahmins are in all respects the first caste among the Hindoos, and by the laws are entitled to very extraordinary privileges; especially in cases of delinquency: no other tribe is admitted to the priesthood; to them are all the mysteries of their religion and sacred knowledge confined: they alone understand the

language of the Shastah, or Shastras, those holy volumes which contain the religion and philosophy of the Hindoos; which are divided into four Bedes, or Vedas, a word signifying science. They contain one hundred thousand stanzas of four lines each; treating of divination, astronomy, natural philosophy, the creation of the world, religious ceremonies, prayers, morality, and piety; including hymns in praise of the Supreme Being, and in honour of subaltern intelligence. These books the Brahmins esteem so sacred, that they permit no other castes to read them; and they are written in the Sanscrita language, which is now understood by very few except the Brahmins, and not by all of them: for although there can be no Hindoo priest that is not a Brahmin, yet it by no means implies that all of the Brahmin tribe are priests: on the contrary, they are employed in the political and revenue departments, and appear in various public characters under the governments in India; the great and powerful Mahratta empire is at this day ruled by a Brahmin sovereign, with the title of Peshwa: others throughout the vast peninsula, pursue a variety of employments in the agricultural and commercial lines, and some even cultivate their own lands.

The Hindoo religion admits of no proselytes; and is therefore a principal means of preserving the castes pure and distinct: neither have the Mahomedan conquests and oppressions, nor the intercourse of Europeans with the Hindoos, been able to subvert a system of theology and jurisprudence, founded on a firm basis, and interdicted from all change by the most rigid laws.

This religious and moral system is no doubt of great antiquity; but those who have deeply investigated the

ancient and pleasing fictions of the Hindoo mythology, which bears a great resemblance to that of the Greeks, and may perhaps be traced to the same origin, are of opinion, that the religious and civil laws of the Hindoos, called the Institutes of Menu, were compiled about eight hundred and eighty years before the birth of our Saviour; that the Vedas, or sacred volumes, were written three hundred years prior to the Institutes; and that preceding this period, every thing being handed down by oral tradition, the account was obscure and fabulous.

But divested of extraneous matter, there appears to be a great degree of purity and sublimity in the genuine principles of the Hindoo religion, though now obscured by superstitious rites and ceremonies, and blended with gross idolatry: in their original simplicity, they teach that there is one Supreme Ruler of the universe; who is styled Bramā, or the Great One: they inculcate also, that this Supreme Intelligence consists of a triad, or triple divinity, expressed by the mystic word Om; and distinguished by the names of Vishnu, Bramā, and Sheva; or the creating, preserving and destructive power of the Almighty. Images of these attributes are placed in their temples; and worship and sacrifices are daily performed before them, and a variety of other statues, representing the different qualities of the Supreme Being: so that it is a complete system of polytheism, and a source of a thousand fables subversive of truth and simplicity.

Yet it ever was, and ever must be difficult, for either Christians or Mahomedans to convert a Hindoo: for with them theology is so blended with the whole moral and civil obligations of life, that it enters into every habit, and sanctions almost every action.

On withdrawing the veil from the sacred volumes of the Hindoos, we see Brama, or the supreme deity, represented as absorbed in the contemplation of his own essence, but from an impulse of divine love, resolving to create other beings to partake of his glory, and to be happy to all eternity. He spake the word, and angels rose into existence! He commanded and the host of heaven were formed! they were created free; and were made partakers of the divine glory, and beatitude, on the easy condition of praising their Creator, and acknowledging him for their supreme Lord. But not content with this happy state in the celestial regions, some of the principal spirits rebelled, and drew a number after them; who were all doomed to languish in that scene of horror, so finely described by our sublime poet:

> "Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace,
> And rest can never dwell, hope never comes
> That comes to all, but torture without end,
> Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed
> With ever burning sulphur, unconsum'd!"

In process of time, at the intercession of the faithful angels, the fatal doom of these fallen spirits was revoked, and they were released on the conditions of repentance and amendment, in a state of probation. For this purpose a new creation of worlds took place; and mortal bodies were prepared for the apostate angels, which they were to animate for a certain space; there to be subject to natural and moral evils; through which they were doomed to transmigrate under eighty-nine different forms! the last into that of man! when their powers and faculties are enlarged, and a merciful Creator rests his chief expectations of their repentance

and restoration to his favour. If they then fail, their punishment is renewed, and they are doomed to begin again their first state of transmigration. In this system we are struck with the intermixture of truth with error, and false traditions, bearing in many particulars a resemblance to the sacred truths of divine revelation.

On this hypothesis, it appears that one principal reason for the Hindoos regarding the cow with such religious veneration, is, that they believe the soul transmigrates into this animal immediately preceding its assumption of the human form. No Hindoo, even of the lowest caste, will kill a cow, or taste its flesh; they will die with perfect resignation, rather than violate this tenet; as has been frequently experienced on board the vessels in the Indian seas, when all the provisions except salt beef have been expended But I am not certain respecting the first principle of the Hindoo's veneration for the cow; since many conjecture the command to have originated in the preservation of an animal so useful to mankind: and it is well known, that the Egyptians, Phœnicians, and other ancient nations, have equally venerated this valuable animal.

The Hindoos estimate the delinquency of these apostate spirits, by the class of mortal forms which they are doomed to inhabit; thus all voracious and unclean animals, whether inhabitants of earth, air, or water, as well as men whose lives and actions are publicly and atrociously wicked, are supposed to contain a malignant spirit; on the contrary, those animals which subsist on vegetables, and do not prey upon each other, are pronounced favoured of the Almighty.

That every animal form is endued with cogitation,

memory, and reflection, is one of the established tenets of the Brahmins: indeed it must necessarily follow, from the supposed metempsychosis of the apostate spirits through these mortal forms: they also believe that every distinct species of the animal creation have a comprehensive mode of communicating their ideas, peculiar to themselves; and that the metempsychosis of the delinquent spirits extends through every organized body, even to the smallest insect and reptile. They highly venerate the bee, and some species of the ant; and conceive the spirits animating these forms to be favoured by God, and that the intellectual faculties are more enlarged under them than in most others.

With such tenets we cannot be surprised at their unwillingness to take away the life of any creature whatever; as they must suppose them to possess still more acute sensations than our dramatic poet describes:

> "The smallest beetle that we tread upon,
> In corporal suffering feels a pang as great
> As when a giant dies!" SHAKSPEARE

The devotion of the Hindoos to the Supreme Being, and the inferior deities, consists in regular attendance at the dewals, or temples, especially at the solemn festivals; in performing particular religious ceremonies in their own houses; in prayers, ablutions, fastings, and penances; but especially in oblations, which consist chiefly of spices, incense, rice, fruits, and flowers; and although they have been in former times accused of offering human sacrifices, it is certain they now very rarely shed even the blood of an animal in their religious services.

I shall not dwell particularly on the religious books of the Hindoos, but it would be injustice to omit the following sublime description of the Supreme Being, from the writings of Governor Holwell; who was an early investigator of those subjects, before the field of oriental literature so laudably engaged the attention of the English.

"GOD IS ONE! Creator of all that is! God is like a perfect sphere, without beginning, and without end! GOD rules and governs all creation by a general providence, resulting from first determined and fixed principles. Thou shalt not make inquiry into the essence of the ETERNAL ONE, nor by what laws he governs. An inquiry into either is vain and criminal. It is enough, that day by day, and night by night, thou seest in his works, his wisdom, his power, and his mercy:—Benefit thereby!"

As applicable to this subject, I shall transcribe a few passages from the Vedas of the Hindoos, translated by Sir William Jones, to whose invaluable works we are indebted for so many acquisitions in oriental literature.

"By one Supreme Ruler is this universe pervaded; even every world in the whole circle of nature. Enjoy pure delight, O man! by abandoning all thoughts of this perishable world; and covet not the wealth of any creature existing."

"To those regions where evil spirits dwell, and which utter darkness involves, all such men surely go after death, as destroy the purity of their own souls."

"Unveil, O Thou who givest sustenance to the world, that face of the true sun, which is now hidden by a vase of golden light! so that we may see the truth, and know our whole duty!"

"O Thou who givest sustenance to the world, thou sole mover of all, thou who restrainest sinners, who pervadest yon great luminary, who appearest as the son of the Creator! hide thy dazzling beams, and expand thy spiritual brightness, that I may view thy most auspicious, most glorious, real form."

"Let my soul return to the immortal spirit of God! and then, let my body, which ends in ashes, return to dust!"

"O Spirit, who pervadest fire, lead us in a straight path to the riches of beatitude! remove each foul taint from our souls; who approach thee with the highest praise, and the most fervid adoration!

"God, who is perfect wisdom, and perfect happiness, is the final refuge of the man who has liberally bestowed his wealth, who has been firm in virtue, and who knows and adores that Great One!"

"Remember me, O Om, Thou divine Spirit!"

In Sir William Jones's Institutes of the Hindoo laws, after stating some blemishes, and a few absurdities in the system, that excellent orientalist observes, "nevertheless, a spirit of sublime devotion, of benevolence to mankind, and of amiable tenderness to all sentient creatures, pervades the whole work: the style of it has a certain austere majesty, that sounds like the language of legislation, and extorts a respectful awe; the sentiments of independence on all beings but God, and the harsh admonitions, even to kings, are truly noble; and the many panegyrics on the Gâyatri, the mother, as it is called, of the Vedas, prove the author to have adored (not the visible material sun, but) that divine and incomparably greater light, to use the words of the most venerable text in the Indian Scriptures, which illumines all, delights all, from which

all proceed, to which all must return, and which alone can irradiate (not our visual organs merely, but our souls, and) our intellects. Whatever opinion, in short, may be formed of Menu and his laws, in a country happily enlightened by sound philosophy and the only true revelation, it must be remembered, that those laws are actually revered as the word of the Most High, by nations of great importance to the political and commercial interests of Europe, and particularly, by many millions of Hindoo subjects, whose well directed industry adds largely to the wealth of Britain, and who ask no more in return than protection for their persons and places of abode, justice in their temporal concerns, indulgence to the prejudices of their own religion, and the benefit of those laws which they have been taught to believe sacred, and which alone they can possibly comprehend."

The fakeers, or yogees, of the Senassee tribe, are a set of mendicant philosophers, who travel all over Hindostan, and live on the charity of the other casts of Hindoos They are generally entirely naked, most of them robust handsome men: they admit proselytes from the other tribes, especially youth of bright parts, and take great pains to instruct them in their mysteries. These Gymnosophists often unite in large armed bodies, and perform pilgrimages to the sacred rivers and celebrated temples; but they are more like an army marching through a province, than an assembly of saints in procession to a temple; and often lay the countries through which they pass under contribution.

Many yogees, and similar professors, are devotees of the strictest order, carrying their superstition and enthusiasm far beyond any thing we are acquainted with in Europe: even the austerities of La Trappe are light

in comparison with the voluntary penances of these philosophers, who reside in holes and caves, or remain under the banian trees near the temples. They imagine that the expiation of their own sins, and sometimes those of others, consists in the most rigorous penances and mortifications. Some of them enter into a solemn vow to continue for life in one unvaried position; others undertake to carry a cumbrous load, or drag a heavy chain; some crawl on their hands and knees, for years, around an extensive empire; and others roll their bodies on the earth, from the shores of the Indus to the banks of the Ganges, and in that humiliating posture, collect money to enable them either to build a temple, to dig a well, or to atone for some particular sin. Some swing during their whole life, in this torrid clime, before a slow fire, others suspend themselves, with their heads downwards, for a certain time, over the fiercest flames.

I have seen a man who had made a vow to hold up his arms in a perpendicular manner above his head, and never to suspend them; until he at length totally lost the power of moving them. He was one of the Gymnosophists, who wear no kind of covering, and seemed more like a wild beast than a man: his arms, from having been so long in one posture, were become withered and dried up; while his outstretched fingers, with long nails of twenty years' growth, had the appearance of extraordinary horns: his hair, full of dust, and never combed, hung over him in a savage manner; and, except in his erect position, there appeared nothing human about him. This man was travelling throughout Hindostan, and being unable to help himself with food, women of distinction among the Hin-

doos contended for the honour of feeding this holy person wherever he appeared.

I saw another of these devotees, who was one of the phallic worshippers of Seeva; and who, not content with wearing or adoring the symbol of that deity, had made a vow to fix every year a large iron ring into the most tender part of his body, and thereto to suspend a heavy chain, many yards long, to drag on the ground. I saw this extraordinary saint, in the seventh year of his penance, when he had just put in the seventh ring, and the wound was then so tender and painful, that he was obliged to carry the chain upon his shoulder, until the orifice became more callous.

I could recite many other facts; with a variety of superstitious as well as indecent rites and painful ceremonies, which these mistaken votaries practise, in hopes of appeasing the Deity. Such austerities ought to make us more highly prize the pure and holy tenets of the Christian religion; and should fill our hearts with love and gratitude to HIM who brought life and immortality to light through his Gospel, and offered Himself as an all-sufficient atonement for the sins of a fallen world!

The Brahmins at the Hindoo temples seldom wear a turban, and the upper part of their body is generally naked; but they never appear without the zennar, or sacred string, passing over them from the left shoulder, and a piece of fine cotton is tied round the waist, and falls in graceful folds below the knee. Their simple diet consists of milk, rice, fruit, and vegetables; they abstain from every thing that could enjoy life, and use spices to flavour the rice, which

is their principal food, it is also enriched with ghee, or clarified butter.

We cannot but admire the principle which dictates this humanity and self-denial: although, did they through a microscope observe the animalculæ which cover the mango, and compose the bloom of the fig; or perceive the animated myriads that swarm on every vegetable they eat, they must, on their present system, be at a loss for subsistence Some of the Brahmins carry their austerities to such a length, as never to eat anything but the grain which has passed through the cow; which being afterwards separated from its accompaniments, is considered by them as the purest of all food, in such veneration is this animal held by the Hindoos

From the religious order of Brahmins, I descend to the caste of Chandalahs, or Pariars These people are considered so abject, as to be employed in the vilest offices, and held in such detestation, that no other tribe will touch them; and those Hindoos who commit enormous crimes are excommunicated into this caste, which is considered to be a punishment worse than death

But I will dwell no longer on particular castes, being desirous to draw a portrait of the Hindoos, where they bear a more general resemblance with each other: for although each caste, as I have already mentioned, does not differ in dress, and has a few peculiar customs, and rules for ceremonial and moral conduct, yet they all agree in the fundamental tenets of their religion, and the principal duties of life

They are commonly of the middle stature, slight and well proportioned, with regular and expressive features, black eyes, and a serene countenance. Among the

virtues of the Hindoos are, piety, obedience to superiors, resignation in misfortune, charity, and hospitality: filial, parental, and conjugal affection, are among their distinguishing characteristics. They are extremely sober, drinking only water, milk, or sherbet; and none but those of the lowest order are ever seen in a state of intoxication. They eat in the morning and evening; their cooking utensils are simple, their plates and dishes are generally formed from the leaf of the plaintain tree, or the nymphea lotos, that beautiful lily which abounds in every lake, these are never used a second time· the furniture of their houses is equally simple; seldom extending beyond what is absolutely necessary for a people whose wants are very few, when compared with those of the inhabitants of northern climates

The men, in most of the Hindoo tribes, shave the head and beard, but leave the mustachios on the upper lip, and a small lock of hair on the head. The better sort wear turbans of fine muslin, of different colours, and a jama, or long gown of white calico, which is tied round the middle with a fringed or embroidered sash· Their shoes are of red leather, or English broad-cloth, sometimes ornamented, and always turned up with a long point at the toe Their ears are bored, and adorned with large gold rings, passing through two pearls, or rubies; and on the arms they wear bracelets of gold or silver The princes and nobles are adorned with pearl necklaces and golden chains, sustaining clusters of costly gems, their turbans are enriched with diamonds, rubies, and emeralds, and their bracelets composed of gold and precious stones.

The inferior castes are of a darker complexion than

the superior Hindoos; their dress generally consists of a turban, a short cotton vest and drawers, but some wear only a turban, and a cloth round the waist, although the poorest among them usually contrive to purchase a silver bangle, or bracelet, for the arm

The Hindoo women, when young, are delicate and beautiful; so far as we can reconcile beauty with the olive complexion. They are finely proportioned, their limbs small, their features soft and regular, and their eyes black and languishing · but the bloom of beauty soon decays, and age makes a rapid progress before they have seen thirty years: this may be accounted for, from the heat of the climate, and the customs of the country, as they often are mothers at twelve years of age, and grandmothers at five and twenty. Montesquieu justly remarks, "that women in hot climates, are marriageable at eight, nine, or ten years of age; therefore in those countries infancy and marriage generally go together They are old at twenty; their reason therefore never accompanies their beauty. when beauty demands the empire, the want of reason forbids the claim, when reason is obtained, beauty is no more'" And he further observes, that "those women ought to be in a state of dependence, for reason cannot procure in old age, that empire, which even youth and beauty could not give."

What superior advantages do my fair countrywomen derive from a liberal education, and a milder climate? The virtues and graces assemble in their train, and form a delightful union of chastity, beauty, elegance, and intelligence! What influence such women have over our sex, every man of feeling and sensibility must acknowledge.

No women can be more attentive to cleanliness than the Hindoos: they take every method to render their persons delicate, soft, and attractive their dress is peculiarly becoming, consisting of a long piece of silk, or cotton, tied round the waist, and hanging in a graceful manner to the feet, it is afterwards brought over the body in negligent folds, under this they cover the bosom with a short waistcoat of satin, but wear no linen Their long black hair is adorned with jewels, and wreaths of flowers their ears are bored in many places, and loaded with pearls. a variety of gold chains, strings of pearl, and precious stones, fall from the neck over the bosom, and the arms are covered with bracelets from the wrist to the elbow, they have also gold and silver chains round the ancles, and abundance of rings on their fingers and toes, among those on the fingers is frequently a small mirror I think the richer the dress, the less becoming it appears, and a Hindoo woman of distinction always seems to be overloaded with finery; while the village nymphs, with fewer ornaments, but in the same elegant drapery, are more captivating· although there are very few women, even of the lowest families, who have not some jewels at their marriage

In these external decorations consist the pride and pleasure of these uninstructed females, for very few, even in the best families, know how to read or write, or are capable of intellectual enjoyment We learn from Homer, that the women in ancient Greece always kept in a retired part of the house, employed in embroidery or other feminine occupations, and at this day, the Indian females are never seen by those who visit the master of the family; they know but little of

the world, and are not permitted to eat with their husbands or brothers, nor to associate with other men.

After the girls are betrothed, the ends of the fingers and nails are dyed red, with a preparation from the mendey, or hinna shrub, already mentioned as a principal ornament of the Asiatic gardens. They make a black circle round the eyes with the powder of antimony, which adds much to their brilliancy, and heightens the beauty of the eastern ladies.

The houses of the rich Hindoos and Mahometans, are generally built within an inclosure, surrounded by galleries, or verandas, not only for privacy, but to exclude the sun from the apartments. This court is frequently adorned with shrubs and flowers, and a fountain playing before the principal room, where the master receives his guests; which is open in front to the garden, and furnished with carpets and cushions

Education in general among the Hindoos, is attended with very little trouble: few boys in the subordinate tribes are taught anything more than to read and write, with the rudiments of the trade or profession they are intended for, but many of the Brahmin youth are instructed in astronomy, astrology, and physic; and acquire some knowledge of the civil and religious laws. Nothing can be more simple than a Hindoo school; which is usually under a thatched shed open on three sides, with a sanded floor, on which the boys learn to write, and go through the first rules of arithmetic, in which science some of them make a great progress.

The ceremonies of the Hindoos open an ample field for observation, on which I can now make only a few cursory remarks. The children are married at the discretion of their parents; the girls at three or four, and the boys

at six or eight years of age: the nuptials are attended with much expense; occasioned by an ostentatious parade, nocturnal processions, feasting for several days, and presents to the numerous guests. The bride afterwards sees her husband as a play fellow, she is taught to place her affection on this object, and never thinks of any other; until, when about eleven years old, she is conducted with some ceremony to his house, and commences the duties of a wife, and the mistress of a family. But should the boy die during that interval, the girl must remain a widow for life, have her head shaved, be divested of every ornament, and perform many menial offices. One delicate attention which most of the Hindoo women voluntarily pay to their husband, is, that when he is absent from home for any length of time, they seldom wear their jewels, or decorate themselves with ornaments, since the object they most wish to please is no longer in their presence. No widow is permitted to marry a second time, but a man may have a succession of wives: polygamy is allowed by the Hindoo law, though not generally practised, except when the first wife proves barren. Every Hindoo must marry into his own caste; but among the lower classes at Bombay, I have known this ordinance evaded. And in several parts of India, especially in Mysore and Malabar, the ryots, or cultivators of the land, take as many wives as they can maintain, as the women there are extremely useful in different branches of husbandry, and are not expensive to their husbands.

Most of the Hindoos burn their dead. The funeral piles of the rich are mingled with sandal-wood, and fed by aromatic oils; while the poor are consumed with humble faggots Some put the bodies of their

deceased friends into rivers, especially those they deem holy streams; and there are particular castes in Bengal, who, when they think the sick past recovery, expose them on the banks of the Ganges, fill their mouths with sacred mud, and leave them at high-water mark, to be carried away by the tide.

Throughout the greater part of Hindostan, when all hopes of recovery are over, the sick person is taken from the bed, and laid upon the earth, that he may expire on the element from which he was originally formed After his death, the house is surrounded by widows, hired for the purpose, who make loud lamentations, beat their breasts in a violent manner, and affect every token of grief and despair The male relations attend the corpse to the funeral pile; which, if possible, is always near the water, and after the body is consumed, the ashes are sprinkled with milk and consecrated water, brought from the Ganges, or some other holy stream; and ceremonies are performed for several days.

Although the custom of burning the dead so generally prevails, yet in some districts, on particular occasions, they are interred The extraordinary custom of the widow burning herself with the body of her deceased husband, is never permitted by the English government, and very seldom by the Mahomedans, but it is constantly practised among the Mahrattas, and different castes of Hindoos, under their own princes on the continent.

On the decease of the husband, if his widow resolves to attend him to the world of spirits, a funeral pile is erected, covered with an arbour of dry boughs, where the dead body is placed the living victim

follows, dressed in her bridal jewels, surrounded by relations, priests, and musicians. After certain prayers and ceremonies, she takes off her jewels, and presenting them with her last blessing to her nearest relative, she ascends the funeral pile, enters the awful bower, and placing herself near the body of her husband, with her own hand generally sets fire to the pile; which being constantly supplied with aromatic oils, the mortal frames are soon consumed and the Hindoos entertain no doubt of their souls' re-union in purer realms; where, however false the principle, they are taught to believe that such heroic virtue, and approved constancy, will meet with a proportionate reward. During the cremation, the noise of the trumpets, and other musical instruments, overpowers the cries of the self-devoted victim, should her resolution fail her: but those who have attended this solemn sacrifice, assure us, that they always observed, that even the youngest widows manifested the greatest composure and dignity throughout the awful scene.

The Hindoos are much addicted to astrology, and place such implicit faith in their Brahmins and soothsayers, that they will not make a bargain, enter into a contract, nor suffer a ship to sail, on a day, or an hour, which they pronounce unlucky. They have even lucky minutes, when only important business can be transacted. But we know that Greece and Rome, even in the highest state of civilization and refinement, produced many persons who were equally credulous in omens and auspices, and as much addicted to astrology and augury as any of the modern Hindoos.

Religious disputes and unavailing controversies

seldom disturb the peace of a Hindoo; contentedly he adopts the rites and ceremonies of his forefathers, believes in their tenets, performs his stated ablutions, and keeps the appointed festivals, nor by free inquiries, and freer opinions, does he disturb the peace of others, or permit them to interrupt his own.

It is not then in Hindostan that we are to look for the perfection of art and science, for eminent statesmen, and sage philosophers. but the Hindoos, who reside at a distance from capital cities, still preserve much of that simplicity of manners ascribed by the poets to the golden age: and seem, more than any other people now existing, to realize the innocent and peaceful mode of life, which they ascribe to that happy æra. When I saw the Brahmin women of distinction drawing water at the village wells, and tending their cattle to the lakes and rivers, they recalled the transactions of the patriarchal days. Very often have I witnessed a scene similar to that between Abraham's servant and Rebekah, at the entrance of a Hindoo village in Guzerat. "He made his camels to kneel down without the city, by a well of water, at the time of the evening, even the time that women go out to draw water: and behold Rebekah came out with her pitcher on her shoulder; and the damsel was very fair to look upon: and she went down to the well and filled her pitcher, and came up And the servant said, Let me drink, I pray thee, a little water of thy pitcher, and she said, Drink, my Lord, I will draw water for thy camels also: and she hasted, and emptied her pitcher into the trough, and ran again unto the well to draw water, and drew for all his camels." Genesis, c. xxiv. v. 11, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20.

The Hindoo damsels of the present day live in as much simplicity as those formerly in Mesopotamia; they still descend to the wells, and continue to pour the water into an adjacent trough for the convenience of the cattle.

The natives of the torrid zone are not fond of exercise, walking is by no means considered a pleasing recreation; they like to ride a good horse, with gentle paces, or to take the air in a hackree, a sort of chariot drawn by white oxen; it is seldom hung on springs, and consists of a conical dome, supported by four pillars, covered with broad cloth, and curtains in front and on each side, made to open at pleasure Officers of government, and men of rank, are carried in a palankeen, or more properly a palkee, an Asiatic luxury, as yet unknown in Europe. It is composed of a shell, or frame, about six feet long, and half as broad, fixed to a long bamboo, forming a bold curve in the centre, which there rises about four feet from the frame. Over the bamboo is spread a canopy of cloth, or velvet, the length of the shell, adorned with fringes and tassels of gold, silver, or silk; and the frame contains a bed and pillows, covered with silk, and so disposed that you may either sit up or recline, as is most agreeable The palankeen is carried by four men, who with relays, travel at a great rate; and I think there is not a more cheerful or happy set of people in India, than the generality of the palankeen bearers

The Asiatics love to retire with their women and children to some cool spot near a river or tank, shaded by the friendly banian tree, or spreading mango; there they enjoy that sort of indolent repose which they are

so fond of; and partake of an innocent repast of herbs and fruits, on the verdant carpet.

The wealthy Mahometans, Hindoos, and Parsees, frequently entertain their friends at their garden houses: but in these mixed companies no women are present, except the dancing-girls, or tolerated courtezans, who are accompanied by musicians, playing on instruments resembling the guitar and violin. These singing-men and singing-women, are hired at festivals and grand solemnities, among all sects and professions in India Many of the dancing-girls are extremely delicate in their persons, soft and regular in their features, with forms of perfect symmetry; and, although dedicated from infancy to this profession, they in general preserve a decency and modesty in their demeanor, which are more likely to allure, than the shameless effrontery of similar characters in other countries Their dances require great attention, from the dancer's feet being hung with small bells, which sound in concert with the music Two girls usually perform at the same time, their steps are not so mazy or active as ours, but much more interesting; as the song, the music, and the motions of the dance, combine to express love, hope, jealousy, despair, and the passions so well known to lovers, and very easily to be understood by those who are ignorant of other languages. The Indians are extremely fond of this entertainment, and lavish large sums on their favourites.

Another kind of dancing-girls are dedicated to the principal Hindoo temples; these are supplied by their parents, who are taught, that the presentation of a beautiful daughter to the deity is highly acceptable: they dance and sing at the festivals, but are not con-

sidered in the character of the vestal virgins in ancient Rome, or of those we read of among the Peruvians; for if we investigate the brahminical mysteries, we shall find that these damsels are not only dedicated to the principal idols, but to the pleasure of the priests. They seldom leave the place of their initiation, looking upon themselves as wedded to the deities · but as they frequently have children, who partake more of a terrestrial than a celestial origin, the boys are taught to play on musical instruments, and the girls are early instructed in the profession of their mothers.

All the large cities in Hindostan contain sets of musicians and dancing-girls, under the care of their respective duennas, who are always ready to attend for hire at weddings, and other festivities, or to finish the evening entertainment of the Europeans and natives; and many of them accompany the Asiatic armies to the field.

The singing-men and singing-women mentioned by the aged Barzillai, and the daughters of music that we read of in the sacred pages, as well as in the ancient poets, resembled these characters in Hindostan. The women of Israel came out to meet David and Saul, dancing to instruments of music, and complimenting Saul with having slain his thousands, and David his tens of thousands, 1 Samuel, c. xviii v 7. The choristers of Palestine resembled those of India; who now celebrate a prince, or general, in the same manner at a public festival.

It is not only the introduction of dancing-girls and musicians, but a variety of other customs, which remind us of similar scenes among the ancients. The Greeks and other nations kept their religious festivals

among consecrated groves, gloomy forests, and sacred fountains. The Hindoos do the same, and have done so from the remotest antiquity. The Druids had their solemn oaks, their awful shades, and holy retreats; the Brahmins have their venerable trees, favourite tanks, and consecrated rivers, to which, at appointed seasons, they repair with their followers, to perform ablutions, to drink of the hallowed stream, and deck the banks with flowery oblations. There is something awful in a gloomy shade, it naturally inspires religious reflections, and was therefore held in much veneration by the Druids and pagan priests, but nothing in this respect equals the banian-tree, that rural fane, which is so fully described in a former chapter

The Hindoo religion requires frequent ablution, which is a custom wisely introduced in a warm climate, where cleanliness is very conducive to health: these ablutions are performed in the consecrated tanks near the temples, but in most of the principal cities are hummums, or warm baths; and the people of fortune, especially among the Moguls, have these conveniences in their own houses Bathing sumptuously was a great luxury among the Greeks and Romans, and the buildings appropriated to this purpose, constitute some of the most magnificent remains of antiquity. The hummum is equally the delight of the Asiatics; as is the subsequent anointing with aromatic oils. The Hindoo women perfume their hair with oil of cloves, cinnamon, sandal, mogrees, and other sweet-scented flowers; and those who can afford it, use the oil, or ottar of roses; this delicate and costly perfume is made in Persia, and the northern provinces of Hindostan: it is the pure essential oil of roses, rising in

small particles on the surface of newly-distilled rose-water. In Persia, whole fields are covered with the Damascus-rose, or the scripture rose of Sharon · but it requires many gallons of rose-water to furnish only a few drops of this delicious essence.

The Hindoos, as well as the Mahometans, are forbidden the use of wine and spirituous liquors, and I believe most of the higher classes attend strictly to the prohibition; the lower classes are less abstemious: but rich and poor, especially officers in the army, and soldiers, are addicted to the use of opium, which they take in large quantities, and enjoy the pleasing delirium it occasions In battle it inspires a false courage, and sometimes produces a phrenzy, which lasts only for a short time, leaving those who swallow this pernicious drug in a state of languor and imbecility, until a renewal of the dose revives the spirits · but its frequent use enfeebles the constitution, and shortens the lives of its deluded votaries.

Opium is used to a better purpose by the halcarras, who are a set of people employed as messengers, spies, and letter carriers. An halcarra takes a letter, wraps it up in some secret fold of his shabby garment, and with a little opium, some rice, and a small pot to draw water from the wells of the charitable, he undertakes a journey of several hundred miles, and receives his reward on delivering the letter.

CHAPTER V.

Mahomedan Conquests in Hindostan—Establishment of the Empire of Ghizni.—Invasion of India by Timur-lung—Mogul Empire formed—Character of Akber—Usurpation of the Nawabs, after the death of Aurungzebe—Religion of Mahomed—Mahomedan Women—Genii, Talismans, and Charms—Loss of a precious Gem—Fire-flies—Great Extent of the Mahomedan religion—Ishmaelites—Solomon's Trade with India—Traffic of the Ancients—Extensive Commerce of the Arabians—General Character of the Mahomedans in Hindostan.

THE rich and fertile kingdoms of Hindostan were inhabited entirely by the Hindoos, until the year 976 of the Christian æra, when the Islamites, or Mahomedans, commenced their conquests in the northern provinces, and formed the empire of Ghizni. These invaders were Tartars, from the northern parts of Asia, who brought with them the most bigoted attachment to the Mahomedan faith. Under a pretence of converting the Hindoos to the tenets of the Koran, they destroyed their temples, and plundered them of the wealth which had been accumulating for ages. The treasures of gold and jewels found in some of those sacred repositories, appears almost incredible. History informs us, that the Sultaun Moaz-ul-Dien, who made nine expeditions into Hindostan, left behind him in diamonds alone, of various sizes, five hundred mauns in weight, which is little less than twenty thousand pounds in avoirdupois: and the avarice and cruelty of Mahmood, the first sultaun of Ghizni, in

consequence of an impious vow, are too shocking to relate. The invaders at length reduced all the northern kingdoms; the Mahomedan religion was established, and followed by the most horrid massacres and devastations during the reign of eighteen princes: a period which presents a sanguinary picture of war and famine, desolation and despair, arising from the frequent but ineffectual struggles of the wretched Hindoos, for their civil and religious liberties.

At the end of the fourteenth century, Timur Bec, or Tamerlane, a prince descended from Zingis Khan, chief of the Mogul Tartars, invaded the empire, established by the former Mahomedan conquerors, and with atrocious cruelty plundered not only the Hindoos, but the followers of the prophet. The Mogul empire was not, however, completely founded until the sixteenth century; when Baber, a descendant of Timur, got possession of Delhi, and made it the capital of his dominions. Most of the southern districts were shortly after subdued, and the tenets of the Koran adopted by numbers; the converts entirely relinquished the Hindoo manners and dress, and lost the name.

After these Mogul sovereigns were firmly established on the imperial throne, they permitted their Hindoo subjects the free enjoyment of their religion; and although, from foreign wars, and intestine commotions, the picture of the times too often presented a scene of blood and cruelty, yet the blessings of peace sometimes prevailed: during those happy intervals, poetry, history, and music, raised their dejected heads, and with many useful arts and sciences, assumed a short-lived smile; convincing us they only wanted the

aid of milder governments, and less tumultuous times, to flourish in the realms of Hindostan, as well as in Grecian or Italian climes.

Among the sovereigns of Hindoston, the imperial Akber merits particular notice; and, did my limits permit, gladly should I attempt a theme, on which poets and historians have dwelt with fond delight. Akber succeeded his father Humaioon, the eldest son of Sultaun Baber, in the fourteenth year of his age; and from that early period, during a long reign of fifty years, shone a bright example of wisdom, clemency, and justice. He was supreme monarch over all the provinces of Hindostan, from the Indus to the Ganges; and by his mildness and equanimity diffused happiness throughout his extensive dominions: the Hindoos enjoyed their religious privileges without molestation, no distant governor was suffered to be guilty of the smallest oppression; agriculture and commerce flourished, the elegant arts were cherished, and a princely encouragement was given to literature and science The Ayen Akbery, or institutes, compiled by Abul Fazel, the secretary and historian of Akber, remain a lasting monument of the justice, prudence, and unwearied assiduity, of this great prince, for the true interest of his subjects He reigned from 1556 to 1605.

The Mogul empire continued to flourish from the reign of Akber until the death of Aurungzebe, in the beginning of the eighteenth century; soon after that event, the nawabs, or governors of the distant provinces, began to shake off their allegiance to the court of Delhi, and established themselves as independent princes; by which means the power of the emperors

gradually declined, and instead of one Mahomedan despot, a number of inferior sovereigns, styled nabobs, or nawabs, arose in different parts of the empire; so that there is now hardly a place of note in Hindostan, where the followers of the Arabian prophet are not found; being tolerated under the Hindoo rajahs, and protected by all the European governments.

It is unnecessary to discuss the tenets of the Koran, which is the standard of the Mussulmaun faith; its rules for religious and moral conduct, are as much attended to in Hinsdostan, as in other countries professing the same religion.

Mahomed, the only son of Abdallah, a prince of Mecca, was born in that city in the year of Christ 571, and died at Medina in 631. At the age of forty, he publicly assumed the character of a prophet sent by God to establish in its purity the religion of the patriarchs. Being desirous of superseding the missions of the Jewish and Christian law-givers, he admitted their divine origin, but these proving ineffectual to accomplish their intended purpose, the artful Arabian announced himself to be the Paraclete promised by Jesus Christ, and asserted that the Almighty had sent him with more ample powers, and had especially commissioned him to compel those by force, who resisted gentler means, to embrace the doctrines of the Koran, which had been revealed to him from heaven by the angel Gabriel. By his uncommon art and address, and by the temporal power which he had acquired in Arabia, Mahomed not only spread his religion in that country, but throughout Egypt, Syria, and Persia: his posterity were looked upon as holy, and reigned over some of the most considerable kingdoms in Asia.

About ten years after the commencement of his religious career, some of his more enlightened countrymen, who had known the prophet from his youth, but neither approved of his life or doctrine, resolved to destroy him, and deliver the world from such an impostor: Mahomed, apprized of their design, fled from Mecca to Medina, where the fame of his sanctity procured him a favourable reception. This event, which happened in the six hundred and twenty-second year of the Christian æra, is called the hegirah, or flight, and from this period the Mahomedans compute their time, dating every thing from the first year of the hegirah.

The complexion of the Mahomedans in India, is much the same as that of the Hindoos; a clear olive brown; their dress is in many respects similar; especially in the turban, the long white gown, sash, and shoes; but in addition, the Mussulmauns wear full long drawers, generally of a satin called kincob, with gold and silver flowers; and a catarra, or short dagger, in their girdle. The warriors have a broad sword, with spears, lances, and fire-arms; and some of the bravest troops in Hindostan are Mahomedans, from Arabia, Candahar, Scindy, and the provinces bordering on Persia. Their religion permits the use of all animal food, except pork, which, with the secret indulgence of wine and spirits, renders them more robust and hardy than the disciples of Brahma: avarice, indolence, and effeminacy, mark the character of the Hindoo; and if, to the two former, we unite ambition, valour, and jealousy, we shall have a tolerably correct outline of the Mogul.

The Mahomedan women in India enjoy less liberty

than the Hindoos; but in complexion, manners, and behaviour, are not unlike them. They adorn themselves with a variety of jewels, worn over a close gown of muslin, with long sleeves and a short waist; silk or satin drawers reach to the ancles, and a transparent veil covers the head The education of these women, like that of the Hindoos, is very confined; the men do not seem to wish them to be rational companions, and purposely keep them in a state of ignorance. I believe music is prohibited by the Koran, but the Mahomedans have dancing girls among them; and hire vocal and instrumental music at weddings, and other entertainments where a mixed company is invited.

The Moguls, Persians, Arabians, and the generality of the Asiatics, believe in genii, angels, and supernatural agents of various denominations and degrees of existence; their histories, tales, and romances abound with such imagery. Some are the friends and guardians of the human race: others, called the evil genii, are in a constant state of war with the benevolent spirits. On this account, talismans, amulets, and charms, esteemed for their latent virtues and mysterious powers, are worn by the inhabitants of India; who believe that such cabalistical preparations are effectual against witchcraft, fascination, and all the operations of the malevolent genii: they serve also as guards and protectors of hidden treasures, which are frequently buried under the earth, to conceal them from the avarice of Asiatic despots.

The Greeks and Romans were not exempt from these prejudices, nor is it long since they have subsided in England. Acts of parliament on this subject,

were passed so late as the reign of James the First. In the age of chivalry, enchantment and divination prevailed throughout Europe; and in the oath administered by the constable to the combatants in a duel, are these expressions; "Ye shall swear that ye shall have no stone of virtue, nor hearbe of virtue; nor charm, nor experiment, nor none other enchauntment by you; and that ye trust in none other thinge properly, but in God, and your body, and your brave quarrel."

I constantly wear one of these talismanic stones, it having been left to me by an invaluable friend: it consists of a convex oval emerald, as taken from the mine; uncut and unpolished: it is set in plain gold, and shines in native beauty without any extraneous ornament. I pretend not to investigate the antiquity and legendary tales of this ring during the time of its oriental proprietors, which gave it an imaginary value far exceeding its real worth: but the English gentleman who possessed it fifty years ago, fully appreciated those virtues. He had from his early youth been much with the Hindoos; and although a Christian in principle, he believed also in lucky and unlucky days, omens, and spells, so universally accredited by the Hindoos.

This gentleman had often been at Poonah, the capital of the Mahratta empire, and had resided much among the Brahmins. When a member of the council at Bombay, about forty years ago, he was appointed ambassador to the Mahratta government, on an affair of great importance to the East India Company and the English nation: the business was so urgent, that he left Bombay in the middle of the rainy season to ascend

the Gaut mountains, and reach the Mahratta capital on a day which the Hindoo astrologers had marked as peculiarly auspicious. Being in a public character, he travelled with a considerable retinue; as there were no choultries, or caravansaries, on that road, they generally pitched their tents where they found the convenience of shade and water; for in the rainy season, on the western side of the Indian peninsula, a series of fair weather often holds for several weeks together, when those accommodations are as desirable to travellers as during the fine months.

On the second evening of the journey, the encampment was formed under a friendly banian tree, on the margin of a lake: on retiring to his sleeping-tent, the ambassador missed his ring; the strictest search was immediately made for it without success: it was not merely the loss of the ring which now troubled the owner; he annexed certain ideas to the event, which I shall not attempt to explain; and, notwithstanding the urgency of the embassy, and the implied necessity of being at the Mahratta durbar on the auspicious hour already mentioned, he remained the next day at the encampment, in search of this precious gem, and offered a large reward for its discovery; but in vain: and the following morning he proceeded on his journey, under very unpleasant sensations. The embassy continued about thirteen months; at which period, during the ensuing rainy season, the gentleman and his suite returned to Bombay.

The advantage of shade and water induced them to occupy the ground of their former little encampments, and the tents were again pitched upon the same spot where the ambassador had lost his ring: it had rained

hard in the day, but the evening was remarkably fine, and the moon at the full: while sitting at his tent-door after supper, reviewing his late negociations at Poonah, and by an association of ideas, reverting to the loss of his ring in that very place, he perceived the dark side of the grove illuminated by thousands of fire-flies, flitting among the branches, with a brilliancy, of which the faint light of the European glow-worm gives but little idea. Those who have travelled in Italy during the summer months, and have there seen the lampyris, or lucciola, although not so numerous as in the Asiatic woods, can easily conceive the nocturnal splendour of these insects in the torrid zone. I have seen them produce a fine effect in the dark recesses of the majestic Coliseum, and illumine the garden of the Villa Medici at Rome; on the banks of the Arno, they add much to the beauty of the Tuscan evening; and the Italian and the English poets are fond of celebrating the "*emerald light*" of the lucciola and the glow-worm.

While the ambassador was amusing himself with the splendid appearance of these insects in the surrounding shades, he observed one of them settled among the grass, which was always stationary and motionless, although shining with equal lustre. Having remarked it for a considerable time, curiosity led him to approach it: the moon shone on the spot; he stooped to seize the insect; and took up his ring. We must first enter into his peculiar feelings respecting omens, talismans, and charms, and then conceive his surprize and joy at this auspicious event. It had most probably been shook from the table cloth thirteen months before, and remained on that spot the whole time, unobserved by other travellers: during the fair season it was perhaps

covered with dust; but now a heavy shower combined with Cynthia's beam to produce the brilliant effect on the convex face of the emerald, and to restore the lucky ring to its owner; who having so highly prized it before the adventure, it is needless to say how much it was now advanced in his estimation.

The three divisions of Arabia were conquered and commanded by Mahomed himself: Abubekir, his immediate successor, assumed the title of caliph, or vicar to the prophet, which continued in that line for several generations. In Europe, and among the Asiatic Christians, his disciples were generally called Saracens; and, under that appellation, in less than a century from the decease of the successful impostor, they spread his religion from the Atlantic ocean to India and Tartary; and his successors reigned in Syria, Persia, Egypt, Africa, and Spain.

The establishment of the religion of Abraham and Ishmael, the great progenitors of the Arabians, was no doubt the principal design of Mahomed, as I have already mentioned; he wished, at the same time, to extend the commerce and increase the wealth of his native country. The Ishmaelites had always been famous merchants, as well as warriors: in a very early state of their tribe, they travelled with their camels to Egypt, laden with spicery, balm, and myrrh; neither had they any objection to deal in slaves, as the history of Joseph exemplifies.

It would be foreign to my purpose to enter into a detail of oriental commerce from that transaction, until the time that "King Solomon made a navy of ships at Ezion-geber, which is beside Eloth, on the shore of the Red Sea, in the land of Edom: and Hiram sent in the

navy his servants, shipmen that had knowledge of the sea, with the servants of Solomon; and they came to Ophir, and fetched from thence gold, four hundred and twenty talents; great plenty of Algum-trees, and precious stones: for the King had at sea a navy of Tharshish, with the navy of Hiram; once in three years came the navy of Tharshish, bringing gold and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks." 1 Kings, ix 26, 27, 28; x. 11, 22.

It is not yet decided whether the island of Ceylon was the Ophir of Solomon, as well as the Serendib of the Persians and Arabians, or whether the vessels of Hiram traded to other parts of India: but from that period the commerce of the East has been a most interesting and productive source of wealth. When refinement and luxury had made a rapid progress in their extensive empire, the Romans were supplied with the most costly productions from all parts of the known world; and received by different channels, a variety of articles from India and China. But there was little maritime intercourse on these seas, until after the promulgation of the Koran; when the Arabians, with a boldness unknown to former navigators, and never exceeded by any, until the discovery of the magnet, were urged by their enthusiastic zeal to spread their new religion on the shores of the Indian continent, and its remotest islands: they were for some time established in the city of Canton, subject to their own laws, and enjoying many privileges: they indeed only resided there as merchants, the cautious policy of the Chinese not permitting them to colonize. In most other places they not only planted their religion, but increased their trade; and returned to their own

country, with a variety of valuable articles. Thus was the oriental commerce enlarged; and numerous converts, from the Red Sea to the remotest of the eastern islands, were added to the Mahomedan faith.

I shall conclude this account of the Mahomedans in Hindostan, with a summary of their general character, from the writings of an intelligent officer, who travelled through the Nizam's country in 1791, and communicated his observations in the first volume of the Oriental Collections:

"What is most surprising to an European, is the decorum, gravity, and elegance of the Moorish children. They are, for the most part, handsomer at this age than when fully grown; and with all that is infantine and engaging, they can upon cases of ceremony assume the unaffected steadiness of an old courtier. By paying attention to what was said to these children by their tutors, and by observing the most admired and popular characters among the men, I endeavoured to acquire some insight into what style of manners was held in greatest repute among the Moors; and I found the leading principles of external behaviour to be a majestic and martial deportment, a serene and steady countenance, which should remain calm and unaltered amidst the greatest events; neither manifesting signs of depression nor exaltation, but capable of that pliability which softens the countenance to the reception of friends, and accompanies good offices with a benignant smile. This frequently borders upon dissimulation, since condemned persons of rank have often been dismissed from the presence to execution, without threats or menaces, but with every mark of politeness. Having discoursed upon this subject with the Moors,

reminding them of similar circumstances in history, they have replied, those instances were marks of collected firmness in the prince; since whatever the cause might be, he should never derogate from his own dignity, nor forget the attentions due to a man of rank, whatever his situation or conduct might be. They are extremely careful not to interrupt one another in discourse; and generally possess a natural eloquence, which they utter with fluency, in a soft, but audible tone; and are peculiarly graceful in their action, which is so expressive, as often to forestall what they are about to deliver."

The same observant traveller makes a remark on the seclusion of the Mahomedan women from the society of the men, which I believe to have great weight in the general opinion of the Orientals. "On combining together the inclinations of Mahomed with his policy, we shall find the seclusion of women from the society of men, gives to the latter all those hours, which, in Europe, are generally employed by men to please the object of their wishes: leaving them at full leisure to pursue, without distractions of jealousy, the business of the day. It also prevents those bitter feuds and lasting animosities, which poison the minds of contending rivals, otherwise formed for mutual esteem and friendship. It preserves the marriage-bed not only from pollution, but also from the dread of it; and it secures women from those delusions and temptations, which irritate the mind with fleeting joys, leaving behind the permanent sting of bitter remorse! while never having tasted the universal triumph and dominion which beauty gives in the circles of Europe, the loss of power is not added to the *painful sensation of fading charms.*"

CHAPTER VI.

Parsees, or Guebres—Everlasting Fire near Baku, in Persia—Religion of Zoroaster and the ancient Magi—Manners and Customs of the Parsees.

THE Parsees, or Guebres, are a people whom the Mahomedan persecutions drove from Persia, their native country, in the eighth century of the Christian æra. They are descended from the ancient Persians, followers of Zoroaster; to whose religious tenets and moral laws, they still profess to adhere.

While the Mahomedan religion was established in Persia under the system of terror, these people emigrated to the isle of Ormuz, and continued there fifteen years; they then embarked in small vessels for India; bringing with them the autus-byram, or sacred fire, which they preserved with the greatest care. After a dreadful voyage, they landed at Diu, on the south-west point of the Cambay Gulph, a settlement now belonging to the Portugueze. They continued at this place for some time, and then crossing the Gulph, landed at Suzan, near Nunsarree, which is a little to the southward of Surat. Here these unhappy Persians implored the protection of the Hindoo rajah; and pathetically related their religious persecutions, their flight from their native land, and all their subsequent misfortunes. Astonished at the appearance of so many armed strangers, the rajah was doubtful how he should receive them: at length humanity prevailed;

he granted them permission to settle in his dominions, and to build a temple for their sacred fire, on their compliance with certain conditions; particularly, that they should never put an ox or a cow to death, nor on any consideration taste the flesh; a covenant, which both themselves and their descendants have kept inviolable to this day.

As their families increased, the Parsees dispersed, and settled at Bombay, Surat, Baroche, and other northern towns on the western coast of India. Active and industrious, they applied themselves to domestic and foreign commerce; and many of the principal merchants and owners of ships at Bombay and Surat, are Parsees: others learned the mechanic arts, and engaged in the varied manufactures of the loom: the best carpenters and shipwrights in India are of this tribe.

Their number at Bombay is considerable, and at Surat they amount to twenty thousand families: hitherto they have not attempted to establish a government of their own; and an unfortunate schism in their religious tenets has divided them into two separate factions.

The Parsees are all worshippers of fire; and in every temple is a sacred flame, lighted at first from that originally brought from Persia, which is still preserved with great reverence at Oodwara, near Nunsarree. These fires are attended day and night by the andaroos, or priests, and are never permitted to expire. This was also positively enjoined to the Levites, and was adopted by the Greeks and Romans under all their governments. Quintus Curtius tells us that the eternal fire was carried before the army of Darius, on silver altars, followed by the Magi singing hymns, and by

three hundred and sixty-five youths clothed in scarlet, amounting to the number of days in the year. These fires are preserved in a large chafing-dish, carefully supplied with fuel, perfumed by a small quantity of sandal-wood, or other aromatics. The vulgar and illiterate worship this sacred flame, as also the sun, moon, and stars, without regard to the invisible Creator; but the learned and judicious adore only the Almighty Fountain of Light, the author and disposer of all things, under the symbol of fire. Zoroaster, and the ancient magi, whose memories they revere, and whose works they are said to preserve, never taught them to consider the sun as any thing more than a creature of the Great Creator of the universe: they were to revere it as his best and fairest image, and for the numberless blessings it diffuses on the earth; the sacred flame was intended only as a perpetual monitor to preserve their purity; of which this element is so expressive a symbol. But superstition and fable have, through a lapse of ages, corrupted the stream of their religious system, which in its source was pure and sublime. Herodotus says, that the ancient Persians venerated fire as a divinity; and the magi, who detested the adoration of images, worshipped the Almighty only by this element. At the same time they admitted two principles, one the cause of all good, the other that of all evil; the former was called Oramades, the latter Ahriman; the one represented by light, the other by darkness. This was the system of Zoroaster and the Magi; and under various modifications, inculcated in their moral system, is supposed to form the contents of the Zend Avesta, or sacred books of the modern Parsees.

Butler, in his Horæ Biblicæ, written in 1769, says:—"The morality of the Zend Avesta is entitled to praise: purity of word, action and thought, is repeatedly inculcated" An attention to truth is likewise particularly enforced To multiply the human species, increase its happiness. and prevent evil, are the general duties inculcated by Zoroaster to his disciples, agriculture, and the multiplication of useful animals, are particularly recommended to them. "He," says Zoroaster, "who sows the ground with diligence, acquires a greater stock of religious merit, than he could gain by ten thousand prayers." The disciple of Zoroaster is enjoined to pardon injuries; to honour his parents and the king, whose rights are derived from Ormuzd, to respect old age; to observe general gentleness of manners, and to practise universal benevolence Fasting and celibacy are forbidden to the men, and as far as it may depend on themselves, the latter is discouraged in women if a man's wife be not barren, only one wife is allowed him: a marriage with his cousin-german is recommended to him as an act particularly pleasing to Heaven.

Some of the Parsee tribe still reside in Persia, near the city of Baku, on the shores of the Caspian sea, about ten miles from the everlasting fire which they hold in such veneration. This fire issues from the cleft of a rock, five or six feet in length, and three in breadth, appearing like the clear flame over burning spirits; sometimes it rises to the height of several yards, at others only a few inches above the aperture. It has continued thus for ages without intermission, and the rock is said not to be in the least affected,

either by the fire consuming its substance, or changing its colour. Travellers mention, that if a hollow tube is put a few inches into the ground, for some hundred yards around this rocky opening, a similar flame issues through the orifice: the poorer people, who live in the neighbourhood, frequently cook their victuals over the flame. What the cause may be I know not, but the effects of subterraneous fire, which I observed at Solfaterra, near Naples, greatly resemble those on the border of the Caspian.

I am almost led to suppose that the worship of fire originated at the mountain of Baku. An ancient historian* mentions that the Persians relate a story concerning Zoroaster, whose love of wisdom and virtue, leading him to a solitary life upon a mountain, he found it one day all in a flame, shining with celestial fire; from the midst of which he came without any harm, and instituted certain sacrifices to God, who, he declared, had appeared to him. In their nuptial ceremonies, and many other particulars, the modern Parsees have adopted the customs of the Hindoos; but their mode of treating the dead, seems to be peculiar to themselves. At Bombay, soon after the decease, the body is conveyed to Malabar Hill, an eminence about three miles from the town, where are two large cemeteries, fifty or sixty feet in diameter, surrounded by circular walls, twenty feet high. Within this enclosure is a smooth pavement, sloping gradually from the side of the wall to the centre, where it terminates in a deep pit; the bodies are laid on this pavement, which is divided into three distinct parts, for men, women, and children, they are exposed naked,

* Dion Chrysostom

to be devoured by vultures and birds of prey, which generally hover over them· a person is appointed to watch which of the eyes they first pluck out; as they annex some superstitious idea, respecting the happiness or misery of the departed spirit from this circumstance: and the bones are afterwards deposited in a pit, to make room for others in this extraordinary mausoleum. When they are carrying the corpse to the tomb, which is a duty belonging to a particular set of people, they must neither speak, nor touch wood, for which reason the body is laid upon an iron bier, and the drawbridges at the town-gates, when they pass over them, are covered, either with sheets of copper or with fresh earth. It is well authenticated that for a long time the ancient magi retained the exclusive privilege of having their bodies left as a prey to carnivorous animals, and that afterwards the Persians exposed all the dead bodies of their friends indiscriminately, to be devoured by birds and beasts of prey; a custom which is still in some measure adhered to by their descendants in India, and by the Guebres in Persia, although so very repugnant to the feelings of almost every other civilized nation

The Parsees are generally a tall comely race, athletic and well formed, and much fairer than the natives of Hindostan, the women are celebrated more for chastity than cleanliness, the girls are delicate and pleasing, but the bloom of youth soon decays, before twenty they grow coarse and masculine, in a far greater degree than either the Hindoos or Mahomedans. The Parsees are certainly an industrious and increasing people, and a valuable class of subjects in the Company's settlements.

CHAPTER VII.

Portugueze, and their Descendants in India—Romish Missionaries—Indian Converts—General Remarks on the Moral and Religious System of the Hindoos—The Deluge confirmed by the Hindoo Scriptures—Comparison between the Egyptians and Hindoos—Further Illustration of the Hindoo Religion, compared with the Mosaical Dispensation—Irán in its ancient state—Quotation from Bishop Watson

Such as I have endeavoured to describe it in the preceding chapters, was the state of Hindostan, and such the character of its inhabitants, at the close of the fifteenth century, when the passage to India, round the Cape of Good Hope, was discovered by Vasco de Gama. That nation soon extended her commerce to its remotest shores, and established settlements in different regions, especially on the Malabar coast, and island of Ceylon: the excellent harbour at Bombay caused it to become one of the principal ports· it continued under their government until it was ceded to the English, on the marriage of the Infanta Catherine to Charles the Second The Portugueze have left numerous descendants there, who live under the protection of the English laws, and enjoy the free exercise of their religion· they are generally styled Portugueze, retain their European names and dress, and speak their original language, although greatly corrupted; but from their intermar-

riages with the natives of inferior tribes, their complexion is darker than the high castes of Hindoos, and their education is very contracted.

The proselytes made by the Romish missionaries in the East, are generally among the lowest tribes of the Hindoos: or such whose misconduct having caused them to lose their caste, are glad to embrace Christianity as a religion which is open to all. But whenever the Hindoos or Mahomedans are baptized into the Christian faith, the women lay aside their becoming eastern drapery, and put on a jacket and petticoat; and the men wear as much of the European apparel as their circumstances will admit of: a coat and stockings seldom form part of their dress, except on a religious festival, or some particular occasion.

Many respectable Armenian merchants, with their families, as well as a few Persians, Turks, Arabians, and Jews, occasionally reside at Bombay; but the Hindoos, Mahomedans, and Parsees, form the great mass of the inhabitants. Fearful of prolixity, I have, in the foregoing pages, omitted many things inserted in my original letters; but I have endeavoured to give a faithful portrait of these interesting people; every thing I have asserted was dictated by as impartial a judgment as I was enabled to form, during a long residence among them. I viewed them with an unprejudiced mind, and wherever I went, I sought for knowledge at the best sources of imformation among the natives themselves: but in that respect I find my own opinion confirmed by an intelligent observer, that "to whatever country of Europe the traveller directs his steps, he meets with people ready to give him information, and proud to display their knowledge; in

Asia the reverse occurs, the natives are difficult of access, averse to strangers, and reserved in their manners · slaves to their own customs, they hold those of other nations in contempt. Ever desirous to preserve their own dignity, they are too apt to consider the unstudied manners and familiarity of the English, as marks of disrespect, and will never conceive we dare to conduct ourselves in like manner to our own superiors."

Since my return to Europe, the researches into Asiatic history, the investigation of oriental manners and customs, and especially an inquiry into the moral and religious system of the Hindoos, have engaged general attention · much valuable information has been given to the public within these few years, by those who made their observations in Hindostan, or by literati who derived their knowledge from philosophical studies at home, who have compared the transactions of remote ages with the occurrences of the present day, and from the stores of sacred and profane history, have produced such documents and proofs in favour of the former, as must satisfy every candid and unprejudiced mind.

Among the most interesting of the recent publications on this important subject, are the Bamptonian lectures at Oxford, by Mr. Carwithen, on a view of the Brahminical religion, its confirmation of the truth of the Sacred History, and its influence on the moral character. I trust a few extracts from so valuable a source of information, will not be deemed irrelevant to the general tendency of these volumes.

The facts stated in the second lecture tend to establish the following important conclusions: that the

strongest presumption arises, both from the testimonies of ancient authors, as far as they can be collected, as well as from internal evidence, that the chronological system of the Brahmins has suffered a material change, and that their present scheme is of comparatively modern invention, that, in earlier times, this system had some obvious and striking similarity to that of the Mosaical history; that even if the reality of the æra from which their present age commences, and which is now generally supposed to be founded on retrogade calculation, were established, this admission could not, in any degree, affect the truth of the Sacred Writings; and that the only probable origin, which can be assigned to the invention of the primeval zodiac, expressly contradicts the unwarrantable assumption of an Egyptian sphere, formed at the immense distance of sixteen thousand years before the present time.

The author then naturally asks, "To what cause it can be assigned, that in all the historical documents which have hitherto been brought to light, they should ascend to nearly the same point of time, and then become enveloped in obscurity, and degenerate into fable? Whence happens it, that these fables, in nations the most distant and dissimilar, however they may be disguised by difference of language, however incumbered by the adhesion of foreign circumstances, which the diversity of national character may have engrafted on them, should still retain such an evident similarity as to be clearly traced to the same source? What cause can be assigned, that the whole fabric of pagan mythology, whether surrounded by the gaudy, but misshapen ornaments of eastern magnificence, or rising in

the graceful elegance and exact symmetry of Grecian taste, or frowning terrors in the ponderous and massive grandeur of northern architecture, should be raised on the same foundation, however the superstructure may be modelled or varied by the influence of national manners? If this globe had been inhabited by nations of a separate and independent origin, could this uniformity in their traditions possibly have existed? If mankind had reached that perfection, both in science and refinement, which is pretended, would there not have occurred some distinct and diversified events which would have clearly characterized these periods, and would have found their way to future generations?

"From every investigation it clearly appears, that no computations have been able to invalidate the only historical narrative, which, independently of the stamp of divine authority, presents a rational account of the formation of the universe, of the creation of man, and of the infant state of the world, which in accuracy of description, not less than in sublimity of language, stands unrivalled. In vain have they been applied to invalidate that everlasting covenant, which was established before the foundations of the world were laid; which, as it had a retrospect to the period before creation existed, shall receive its full and glorious accomplishment when creation shall be no more.

"The variety of fables to which the awful event of the deluge has been accommodated, the diversities in the narrative, adapted to local prejudices or to theological opinions, prove that they are taken from uncommunicated fragments of some original tradition. The incident is recorded, not by construction of philosophical theories, but by simple narrators of facts. It

is also observable, that the accounts of a deluge still to be found among the more eastern nations, are as strongly marked by truth, and are equally conformable to the history of Moses, as those which are preserved in Egypt.

"But although the concurrent voice of antiquity thus loudly responds to the testimony of the Hebrew historian; though the memorials of an event, so interesting to the early world, must have been treasured up with care, recollected with sentiments of awe and gratitude, and shadowed out in hieroglyphic sculpture in monuments on the earth, though the combined powers of fancy and erudition have been successfully employed, in referring to this source many of the pagan symbols and devotional ceremonies, yet vague and unsatisfactory would all these evidences appear, if they had not been illustrated and confirmed by that narrative, of which all other records are but faint adumbrations. If all the solitary fragments scattered throughout the voluminous mass of oriental mythology, joined with those which the nations of the west have retained, were collected and concentrated, their united testimony would be insufficient to establish the reality of this calamitous prodigy. It is not on the exact coincidence of sacred and profane history, that we attempt to prove the truth, and assume the superiority of the former: but that the one is perspicuous and full, where the other is obscure and defective: the one is concise where amplification would be unnecessary, or would tend to no other purpose than the gratification of a vain curiosity, the other, by those additions which the artifice or conceit of man has interwoven, has sometimes suppressed the truth by concealment, and sometimes weakened it by expansion

"In common with other nations, the Hindoos attribute the creation of all visible things in six distinct periods, the successive formation of all terrestrial animals, and finally of man, to one Supreme God. In common with all other nations, they have also preserved some indistinct remembrance of the antediluvian generations, and the antediluvian personages mentioned in the Jewish Scriptures But the first great and important event, which they attest, clearly and unequivocally, is the awful catastrophe of the general destruction of the world by a flood, and therefore it is from that point, that the monuments of profane antiquity are properly called in, to confirm the truth of the Sacred History."

The civil history of mankind, contained in the remaining fragments of the earliest annalist, agrees with the narrative of Moses. They concur in placing the theatre of the first memorable events that befel the human race, within the limits of Irán, understood in its true and extended signification, between the Oxus and the Euphrates, the Armenian mountains and the borders of India.

The literature of India, lately explored, records the establishment of the Brahminical religion in Irán, previously to its adoption in Hindostan. We are informed that a mode of faith and worship, essentially different from that of Zoroaster, was anciently professed in Persia, and continued to be secretly entertained by many eminent men, long after the general predominance of the latter.

"That Irán, understood in its true and enlarged signification, was the country from which the three original and distinct races of men first separated, is rendered still more probable from its central situation.

It was from this part of the globe, that the adventurous progeny of Japhet could best transport themselves to those countries, which, on account of their being separated from Judea by the sea, were emphatically styled, in the writings of Moses, 'the isles of the Gentiles;' in contradiction to Asia, which to Palestine was strictly continental. It was nearest to this quarter that the peaceful descendants of Shem settled themselves in Arabia, where so many of their names may now be discovered, and it was from this quarter, that the Ammonian race, so famed for daring exploits, subdued the vast and fertile countries of India, Ethiopia, and the countries situated on the Nile; where they have left so many vestiges of their scientific excellence, and of their martial prowess

"From an accurate survey of the Brahminical religion, as we find it established in India, it is impossible not to perceive its essential identity with that of the Egyptians, and therefore that both must have emanated from a common origin. Both nations were distinguished by a division into various orders, of which the philosophers were the most honourable. Each tribe adhered to the profession of its family, and never invaded the department of another. The fundamental principles of their astronomical systems, would also incline us to suppose, that their sciences were derived from the same source

"From a comparison of different facts, the following will appear to be the result: at the time of the general dispersion of mankind, some tribes migrated towards the East to India, while others diverged towards the West to Egypt, and some still remained in their original settlements in Chaldea. Egypt, therefore, we might expect to find the source of knowledge for the

western, and India for the eastern parts of the globe. The few general traditions which they had received from their ancestors, it is reasonable to imagine, would find a place in the religious systems of all. These traditions would remain unaltered, chiefly in countries like India, insulated from the rest of the world by continued and almost impregnable barriers.

"We find that the most common method of accounting for the origin of evil is the degeneracy of man from a state of purity to a state of corruption: a doctrine which has retained a place in the popular creed of every nation. Of Brahminism, it may be almost said to form the basis. It is this idea which has regulated its elaborate scheme of chronology; it is this idea which causes its followers to submit to the most excruciating penances, in order to purge the soul from the stains which she has contracted during her abode in this polluted body They have indeed corrupted and obscured this doctrine; they have engrafted on it additions which do not properly belong to it; they have carried it so far, as to inspire them with a hatred of life, and a dereliction of every worldly enjoyment; they have continually placed before their eyes the accomplishment of that melancholy period, when a total decay of bodily strength, as well as an entire degeneracy of morals, shall increase the sum of present misery; but these deviations from the truth could never have happened, unless they had truth itself for a foundation. These are phantoms of the imagination, which would never have existed, if they had not been derived from some correspondent reality.

"From the fall of man, we are naturally led to the consideration of a positive ordinance immediately connected with it, and springing out of it; THE CUSTOM

OF SACRIFICIAL OBLATIONS, AS AN EXPIATION FOR SIN.

In whatever point of view this custom may be regarded, whether as eucharistical or propitiatory, whether originating in the idea that it was a proper mode of expressing sentiments of gratitude to the Deity, for the enjoyment of the bounties of nature, or as a proper atonement for guilt, still a rite so peculiar, and so universal, must have received its sanction from some positive command, and could never have been the dictate of natural reason.

"The Vedas themselves, on some occasions, enjoin the oblations of men, as well as animals, and that the sacrifices of the latter were anciently practised, we have the authority of Strabo and Arrian. It is also well known, that one of the incarnations of Vishnu, that of Budha himself, is described by the Brahmins, as having taken place for the purpose of abolishing the sacrifices enjoined in the Vedas, and whatever difference of opinion may be entertained concerning the time, or the genuineness of this descent, it is a decided proof, that the custom of sacrificial offering must have been universally prevalent."

Bishop Watson, when archdeacon of Ely, in his charge to the clergy of that diocese, says:—"learned men have abundantly proved that a tradition concerning a deluge has prevailed in every quarter of the globe, not only amongst the Romans, Grecians, Egyptians, Babylonians, Persians, and Scythians, but amongst the Iroquois, Mexicans, Brazilians, Peruvians, and other nations of America: and that the inhabitants of Otaheite being asked concerning their origin, simply answered, that their Supreme God a long time ago, being angry, dragged the earth through the sea, and their island being broken off, was preserved."

CHAPTER VIII.

Town of Bombay—English commerce of Bombay—Civil and Military Establishments—Courts of Justice—Domestic Arrangement—Moonlight Evenings

I SHALL conclude my letters on Bombay with a short account of the European inhabitants, and their mode of living at that settlement. The principal town takes it name from that of the island, and is situated near the harbour, at the southern extremity; on the north side is a smaller town, called Mahim, and several villages in different parts of the country

The town of Bombay is about two miles in circumference, surrounded by modern fortifications, with a fosse, drawbridges, three principal gates, and several sally-ports; but the works having been constructed under different engineers, without any regular plan, cannot boast of the strength or uniformity which might otherwise have characterized them

The harbour is large, and secure from the storms and hurricanes which are very frequent and destructive at Surat bar, and on the Malabar coast: near it were three excellent docks, which I believe are since increased in number; and a spacious marine-yard, amply supplied with naval stores of every description: here they build vessels of all sizes, from a ship of the line,

to the smallest grabs and gallivats, employed in the Company's service: the timber used is chiefly teak (Tectona grandis), the most valuable of the oriental forest woods, and more durable than the oak. the master builders and shipwrights of the Parsee tribe, are very skilful, and exact imitators of the best models from Europe.

When I left Bombay, the generality of the public buildings were more useful than elegant: the government-house, custom-house, marine-house, barracks, mint, treasury, theatre, and prison, include the chief of these structures. There were also three large hospitals, one within the gates for Europeans; another on the esplanade for the sepoys, or native troops in the Company's service, and a third, on an adjacent island, for convalescents.

The only Protestant church on the island stood near the centre of the town, it was a large and commodious building, with a neat tower. There was also a charity school for boys, and a fund for the poor, belonging to the Church of England There were seldom more than two chaplains belonging to the Bombay establishment when I was in India, the one resided at the Presidency; the other, alternately at Surat and Baroche, where were considerable European garrisons The Roman Catholics, who enjoy every indulgence from the English government, had several churches and chapels in different parts of the island

The English houses at Bombay, though neither so large nor elegant as those at Calcutta and Madras, were comfortable and well furnished, they were built in the European style of architecture, as much as the climate would admit of, but lost something of that

appearance by the addition of verandas, or covered piazzas, to shade the apartments most exposed to the sun; when illuminated, and filled with social parties in the evening, these verandas gave the town a very cheerful appearance: but since I left India, the town-houses have been almost deserted by the English, who reside entirely at their country villas, the gentlemen only go to the fort in the morning, to transact their business, devoting the evening to domestic pleasure, and convivial meetings at their garden-house.

The large bazar, or the street in the black town, within the fortress, contained many good Asiatic houses, and shops filled with merchandize from all parts of the world, for the Europeans and natives. These shops were generally kept by the Indians, especially the Parsees; who, after paying the established import customs, were exempted from other duties.

Bombay was then one of the first marts in India, and employed a great number of vessels in its extensive commerce. Bussorah, Muscat, Ormuz, and other ports in the Persian Gulph, furnished its merchants with pearls, raw-silk, Carmenia wool, dates, dried fruits, rose water, ottar of roses, and several other productions Arabia supplied them with coffee, gold, drugs, and honey A number of ships annually freighted with cotton and bullion to China, returned laden with tea, sugar, porcelain, wrought silks, nankeens, and a variety of useful and ornamental articles From Java, Malacca, Sumatra, and the eastern islands, they brought spices, ambergris, perfumes, arrack, and sugar: the cargoes from Madagascar, the Comorro isles, Mosam-

bique, and other ports on the eastern coast of Africa, consisted chiefly of ivory, slaves, and drugs: while the different parts of India produce cotton, silk, muslin, pearls, diamonds, and every precious gem; together with ivory, sandal-wood, pepper, cassia, cinnamon, and other luxuries. This valuable commerce was carried on by vessels belonging to the European and native merchants settled at Bombay; totally independent of, and unconnected with, the trade of the East India Company. The exports consisted of English woollen-cloths of every description; with copper, iron, lead, and other European staples, purchased at the Company's sales by the native merchants, both at Bombay, and from the continent. A great deal of cotton, imported in boats from Surat, Baroche, Ahmood, and Jamboseer, was shipped in large vessels at Bombay for Madras, Bengal, and China. The Portuguese from Goa, Damaun, and Europe, carried on a trifling trade with Bombay; but the French, Dutch, and Danish ships seldom touched there; the American intercourse with India was then in its infancy.

The government of Bombay, in its civil and military departments, courts of justice, and other arrangements, was established by the East India Company under the royal charter; but the system has of late years been so often changed, that I decline entering upon the subject. During my residence there, a simple and regular system in the different establishments seemed to answer all the necessary purposes of government, and every thing was conducted with order, economy, and propriety. A writer's salary was indeed small, and very inadequate to even the moderate necessaries of life required in that climate, not exceeding sixty-five pounds a-year.

Having been at all the settlements subordinate to Bombay, from Ahmed-abad to Anjengo, I can assert that the character of the English in India is an honour to their country: in private life, they are generous, kind, and hospitable; in their public situations, when called forth to arduous enterprize, they conduct themselves with skill and magnanimity; and, whether presiding at the helm of the political and commercial department, or spreading the glory of the British arms, with courage, moderation, and clemency, the annals of Hindostan will transmit to future ages names dear to fame, and deserving the applause of Europe. As husbands, fathers, masters, they cannot easily be excelled; while friendship, illustrated in its more general sense by unostentatious acts of humanity and benevolence, shines in India with conspicuous lustre; distress never pleads in vain, and the milk of human kindness flows in ample streams. How often have the sons and daughters of misfortune experienced the blessed effects of oriental benevolence! how often have the ruined merchant, the disconsolate widow, and the helpless orphan, been relieved by the delicate and silent subscription, amounting in a few hours to several thousand pounds, without the child of sorrow knowing its benefactors! And here, with all the milder virtues belonging to their sex, my amiable countrywomen are entitled to their full share of applause. This is no fulsome panegyric; it is a tribute of truth and affection to those worthy characters with whom I so long associated; and will be confirmed by all who have resided in India.

I have not the smallest intention of praising the Anglo-Indians at the expense of my countrymen at

home: the seeds of philanthropy and benevolence, which every where adorn the English character, impregnated in their native soil, flourish vigorously when transplanted in a foreign country, where fortunes are generally more easily obtained than in Europe, where a distressed individual, separated from parents, friends, and every natural source of redress, seems to have a double claim upon the compassion of his more fortunate comrades; and where an annual increase of wealth admits of more unrestrained bounty than a limited income. During my abode in India, there were no arts or sciences to patronize; no literary or charitable institutions to support; and neither hospitals nor infirmaries to call forth private benevolence; the Company provide for the Europeans, and the natives in general take care of their own poor: the chief expenses of the English are therefore confined to convivial pleasures, and domestic arrangements · whereas, in Britain's favoured isle, how abundant are the channels for an ample fortune, and how numerous the worthies who appropriate a very considerable portion of their income to relieve the distresses of their fellow creatures!

As far as the climate admits, the English fashion in houses, equipage, and dress, is generally adopted: very few ladies or gentlemen kept European servants; the former were better served by young female Malabars, trained by themselves, and by negro or Malabar boys, who were our favourite personal attendants; while the upper servants were usually Mahomedans and Parsees; men of character and family, in most srepects preferable to Europeans, and less expensive

Our clerks and writers were mostly Hindoos, who from being liable to so many religious and ceremonial pollutions, were seldom domestic servants; these writers at Bombay are generally called Purvoes; a faithful diligent class, much attached to their employer, careful of his interest, accurate in their accounts, and very often such exact imitators of his handwriting, that it is impossible in a long letter to discriminate the facsimile from the autograph: such an amanuensis is peculiarly useful in a country where the conveyance of letters was then so precarious, that both in public and private dispatches, it was necessary to send duplicate and triplicate copies.

When I resided at Bombay, comfort, hospitality, and urbanity characterized the settlement, and early hours prevailed throughout the presidency and its subordinate settlements: these are now altered to the more fashionable routine of England. The morning was then dedicated to business; every body dined at one o'clock; on breaking up, the company went to their respective houses to enjoy a siesta, and return after a walk or ride in the country, to pass the remainder of the evening, and sup where they had dined. Our rural excursions in that climate are early in the morning, or after the sun declines: the twilight, so near the equator, is short; but the mildness and serenity of the moonlight nights render them peculiarly delightful: there indeed we behold the nocturnal luminary "walking in her brightness," without a vapour to dim the "sweet influences of the Pleiades, or veil the bands of Orion." Such a spectacle naturally disposes the mind to solemn musings, and, while enjoy-

ing the western breeze on the flat roofs of the oriental houses, and beholding the celestial canopy so gloriously adorned, it is impossible not to meditate with pious awe on the Great Parent of the universe,

> "Who gives its lustre to the insect's wing,
> And fills with glory the celestial world!"

CHAPTER IX.

English Settlement of Fort Victoria—Brahmin Village of Hariasar—Hot Wells at Dazagon—Voyage thither from Fort Victoria—Hot winds—Wild beasts—Danger from Tigers—Chameleon of the Concan—Serpents—Excavations in the Mountains—Hindoo Devotees, Swingers, Jugglers, Combatants, and Vaulters—Marre—Mahratta Government—Commencement of a journey to Bombay—Candhar—Vanjarrahs—Gaut Mountains—Monsoons—Cultivation, Gardens, and produce of the Concan—Guru, Hindoo High-priest—Other religious Castes—Value of water in India—Ascent of the Lower Gauts—Mahomedan Patriarch at Ram-Rajah—Hindoo Victims—Reception at Allah Braug—Colabie—Visit from a Mahratta prince—Family of Ragojee Angria—Nymphea Lotos—Lotophagi—Method of supplying travellers with provisions in Hindostan—Conclusion of the Journey—Comparison between India and England in their most striking features

After residing five years at Bombay, a slight indisposition occasioned me to go for a few weeks to the hot-wells at Dazagon, a village belonging to the Mahrattas in the Concan, or Cokun, not far from the English settlement of Fort Victoria; a small fortress sixty miles from Bombay, garrisoned by a company of sepoys, for the protection of a few villages, and a small district in its vicinity: it was then the residence of two gentlemen in the Company's civil service, who collected a trifling revenue, and procured cattle and other articles for Bombay. This settlement was ceded by the Mahrat-

tas in 1756, for Ghereah, a place of far more importance, then lately conquered by Admiral Watson and Lord Clive: during the subsequent wars between the English and Mahrattas, it has never been molested.

Fort Victoria is situated on a lofty hill, near the entrance of Bancoote river, where there is also a lower battery: this river was formerly navigable for large ships; but the sand bank at the mouth constantly increasing during the south-west monsoon, it now only admits a passage for small vessels. Its source is among the eastern mountains, at a considerable distance from whence, winding through woody hills and fertile valleys, it receives some tributary streams, affords many delightful prospects, and abounds with a variety of fish and wild fowl.

The western hills near Fort Victoria, from being exposed to the sea wind, are bleak and barren: in the interior the lofty mountains are covered with trees and underwood, which soften their craggy precipices, and exhibit numerous springs, not common in the torrid zone: these not only add considerable beauty to the landscape, but cause an agreeable freshness in the atmosphere, and add to the luxuriance of the cultivated vales, abounding with rice, natchnee, and other Indian grain.

The villages in the Company's districts, generally inhabited by Hindoos, are surrounded by cocoa-nut, tamarind, and mango trees: the houses are small, seldom more than a thatched cottage; but some of the dewals, or temples, situated in deep glens, overshadowed by the burr-tree, have a solemn appearance. These secluded spots are occupied by Brahmins, whose religious ceremonies are strangely contrasted by the

antic tricks of the monkeys, which, with green pigeons, bulbuls, and other birds, enliven the surrounding groves.

We sometimes extended our rides for several miles into the Mahratta country, and frequently visited the village of Harrasar, celebrated for the sanctity of its temple, the beauty of the women, and for having been the residence of the ancestors of the Brahmin family who at present govern the Mahratta empire. It is inhabited by a high caste of Brahmins; the women are certainly extremely beautiful, characterized by an elegant form, antelope eyes, and a fairer complexion than the lower classes of Hindoos: their jetty locks are richly adorned with jewels; their garment consists of a long piece of silk, or muslin, put on in graceful folds, falling like the drapery of the Grecian statues.

The simplicity of the patriarchal age was realized in the rural occupations of the women at Harrasar: the pastoral lives of the Mesopotamian damsels, and many customs described by Homer, still exist in the Brahmin villages of the Concan: there women of the first distinction, like Rebeka and Rachael, draw water at the public wells, tend the cattle to pasture, wash their clothes in the tanks, and gather the flowers of the nymphea, for their innocent sacrifice at the dewal, and its foliage for plates and dishes.

The wells are situated thirty miles from Fort Victoria, and two from Dazagon: there are several hot springs, and three baths of different dimensions, varying in heat from 104 to 108 degrees; the cases in which the external and internal use of these waters has been most successful, are visceral obstructions: being chalybeate and purgative, their ge-

neral effect in drinking and bathing, is to carry off superfluous bile, create an appetite, and promote perspiration: by relaxing the fibres, without exhausting the strength, they seem peculiarly adapted to invigorate the system, and counteract the languor incident to Europeans in the torrid zone. The Dazagon wells are in essential respects similar to those at Visraboy, in another part of the Concan, nearer to Bombay; and much resorted to from thence.

The voyage from Fort Victoria to Dazagon affords an inland navigation of great variety: the river, seldom wider than four or five hundred yards, winds through a chain of hills, stored with timber, or covered with jungle, and the banks are fringed with salt wood, an evergreen resembling the laurel. an opening valley sometimes presents a view of arable land, villages, and cattle, succeeded by woody mountains, waterfalls, and precipices: in the narrow parts the branches unite over the stream, which is enlivened by monkies, squirrels, and various kinds of birds; all familiar, from being seldom molested: among the halcyon tribes, displaying all the vivid tints of azure, green, and orange, common in other countries, is a black and white kingfisher, with an elegant tuft of the same plumage, not seen at Bombay.

Few prospects exceed that from Dazagon hill, where the English resident of Fort Victoria had a small villa, in which we spent a few days: it commands a view of the river meandering through an extensive valley, and forming a number of islands, clothed with wood, and abounding in villages, cattle, fisheries, and agriculture: this beautiful landscape is bounded by verdant hills and lofty mountains. It was at sunrise I first beheld this lovely scene. I seated myself under a mango-tree with

my sketch-book, wondering how any one could remain in a house, where nature was so lavish of her charms: but short are all rural pleasures between the tropics. Situated under the immediate influence of the sun, in less than an hour the sky appeared as in a glow of fire. At that time I had never felt the effects of what are emphatically called the *hot-winds*, nor had I experienced anything to equal the heat at Dazagon: on the sea-coast the atmosphere is tempered by its breezes; but their refreshing influence does not extend to the interior districts of the Concan, or Guzerat, where the hot-winds generally prevail from the middle of March until the commencement of the rainy season; while Bombay, from its insular situation, is happily excluded from their effects. These scorching blasts begin about ten o'clock in the morning, and continue till sun-set: by noon, the black wood furniture becomes like heated metal, the water more than tepid, and the atmosphere so parching, that few Europeans could long support it, if the delicious coolness of the nights did not in a great degree alleviate the heat of the day. In the house at Dazagon, Farhenheit's thermometer, at sunrise, seldom exceeded eighty degrees; at noon on the same day, it often rose to one hundred and twelve. The European convalescents sent from the hospitals at Bombay for the benefit of the hot-wells, complain much of lassitude, diminished appetite, and impaired digestion during the prevalence of the hot-winds; which seem to counteract the efficacy of the waters: those symptoms in a greater or lesser degree, affected all our party, after leaving the coast, refreshed by the salubrious breezes from the ocean.

My stay at Dazagon and the hot-wells, afforded me an opportunity of seeing more of Indian farming and agriculture, than in the contracted limits of Bom-

bay. The cultivation in the Concan, and adjoining districts of the Deccan, is similar to what is generally practised in the western parts of Hindostan. The soil varies considerably in the same tracts; in some places sandy, others marly, and often a rich black earth: sometimes manured with wood-ashes, mixed with horse and cow-dung, which is placed in small parcels over the field, and afterwards worked in by a harrow, consisting of only three or four teeth, like an ordinary rake, drawn by two oxen; the plough, rather an awkward and simple instrument, composed of three or four pieces of wood, is drawn by three or four yoke of oxen, agreeably to the nature of the soil. In other parts of the Concan, they manure with leaves and small branches of trees, spread over the land, and burnt to ashes, mingled, when procurable, with the dung of cattle, but so much of that is made into cakes, dried, and used for fuel by the Hindoos, especially the Brahmins, that but little comes to the farmer's share.

The soil, generally shallow, badly ploughed, and slightly harrowed, produces juarree, bajeree, natchnee, and some inferior grains; with various kinds of pulse, melons, cucumbers, gourds, seeds for oil, and indigenous vegetables: but I believe neither cotton nor wheat grow in the southern districts of the Concan.

Fort Victoria is chiefly useful to the Company for furnishing Bombay with oxen; by which the markets are supplied with tolerable beef for the European and Mahomedan inhabitants, and especially the English garrison: a number of buffaloes and horned cattle are bred in this part of India; the latter, though small, are very serviceable in agriculture, and thousands are employed in the mercantile caravans. The sheep of the

Concan, as in most of the other provinces, are long, lank, unsightly animals; instead of the snowy wool and silky fleece of the English flocks, they are covered with a coarse brown or grey hair, possessing very few qualities of the wool: in some places they make cameleens, a winter covering and blanket for the poor, from this hair, by twisting it into a thread, and weaving it in a sort of loom: but a considerable manufacture in the Concan, or more properly the Deccan, is the spinning and dying cotton thread, which is sold to the people of Meritch, and wove by them into pieces of cloth called leugra, which forms the principal part of the Hindoo female dress.

In most of the towns and considerable villages is a weekly market, to which the inhabitants of the neighbouring country bring their commodities, either for sale or barter: there is also a collol, or distiller, who pays a duty to government for the privilege of distilling spirits from rice, jagree, mowah, and various other articles: in the Concan there seems to be no prohibition to drinking spirits, except to the Brahmins: it is more generally interdicted in the Deccan, and the decree rigidly enforced. A peculiar species of the brab-tree is thinly scattered on the Concan hills; a quantity of nerah is extracted from it, similar to that from the common palmyra, from which this tree materially differs; the leaves and branches bearing a much greater resemblance to the suparee, or betel-nut tree.

As these hills approach the Deccan mountains, the scenery assumes a sublime aspect: the landscape is varied by stupendous heights, narrow glens, dark woods, and impenetrable jungles; the haunt of beasts of prey, monkeys, and birds: among the latter is the

jungle-fowl, or cock of the woods, probably the domestic fowl in a wild state; being of their size and shape, with the head and some plumage of the partridge, which it also resembles in flavour.

The lower part of these mountains is shaded by a variety of trees, and softened by many flowering shrubs; their summits present a curious kind of stones, which are found in much greater abundance on the Deccan mountains, near Poonah, and profusely scattered in other parts of the country; they are stalactical, grow in large masses, and are of a flinty nature: from the upper and lower surface of these stones proceed crystallizations, which denticulate with each other in a very singular manner: in many, from a single base, or bed of pure flint, shoot forth angular chequers of great lustre and beauty, while others consist of a common sort of stone, not very hard, encrusted by a sparry substance · from a close examination, flint appears to be the matrix of the majority; and as the crystallization advances, the flint diminishes.

Most of the jungles, or wild forests of underwood, abound with tigers, hyænas, hogs, deer, and porcupines: the former are as large and ferocious as in other parts of India, and render a solitary excursion dangerous: they approached close to our habitations at the hot wells, and frequently caused an alarm; the thatched cottages were so close and uncomfortable, that we generally placed our beds under a contiguous mango-grove, until one night a royal tiger, attracted by the smell of a goat which had been recently killed and hung upon a tree, rushed close to my bed, in the road to his prey: the noise awakened us in time to secure a retreat to the cottage before the return of the

monster: the moon shone bright, and in a few minutes we saw him pass us with the carcase of the goat: which had he not found, one of our party would most probably have been his prey.

Many natives of the Concan are keen sportsmen, and form hunting parties, with dogs; nothing in appearance like our sporting ones, but resembling the common pariar dog, except that a few had long hair on the tail and ears. Each man is armed with a stick of hard wood, called *burbur*, which grows in the jungles: the tree bends inwards towards the root, and instead of cutting they break it off, so as to bring away part of the root, to form a head; with this weapon they are admirably dexterous; killing quails, partridges, and pigeons flying; hares running; and breaking the legs of the fleetest deer. A set of these men killed, in this manner, three hares and several quails, in less than an hour. Observing one of the party in a small glen by himself, very intent upon some object, we imagined he saw a hare; on approaching the spot, he warned us by a sign to come on softly, pointing to the root of a milk bush; he then quickened his pace, took up a large stone, and, and suddenly dropping it on a partridge, instantly killed it, with no small degree of exultation.

Bancoote river abounds with a variety of fish; and is the nursery of alligators, and other amphibious animals: on the banks are serpents, guanas, chamelions, and the large seroor, or lacerta, commonly called the bloodsucker: many of them, though hideous in shape, are most beautifully coloured: in some, the shoulders and dewlap take every intervening shade between the palest yellow and brightest scarlet; in others, the dew-

lap is of the brightest azure, contrasted by yellow, scarlet, and orange, in the several parts of the body.

The greatest curiosity is the chamelion (lacerta chamæleon, Lin.) found in every thicket. I kept one for several weeks, of which, as it differed in many respects from those described in Arabia, and other places, I shall mention a few particulars. The chamelion of the Concan, including the tail, is about nine inches long; the body only half that length, varying in circumference, as it is more or less inflated: the head, like that of a fish, is immoveably fixed to the shoulders; but every inconvenience is removed by the structure of the eyes; which, like spheres rolling on an invisible axis, are placed in deep cavities, projecting from the head: through a small perforation in the exterior convexity appears a bright pupil, surrounded by a yellow iris; which, by the singular formation and motion of the eye, enables the animal to see what passes before, behind, or on either side; and it can give one eye all these motions, while the other remains perfectly still: a hard rising protects these delicate organs; another extends from the forehead to the nostrils: the mouth is large, and furnished with teeth, with a tongue half the length of the body, and hollow like an elephant's trunk, it darts nimbly at flies and other insects, which it seems to prefer to the aerial food at one time generally supposed to be its sustenance. The legs are longer than usual in the lacerta genus; on the forefeet are three toes nearest the body, and two without; the hinder exactly the reverse; with these claws it clings fast to the branches, to which it sometimes entwines itself by the tail, and remains suspended: the skin is granulated like shagreen, except a range of hard excres-

cences, or denticulations, on the ridge of the back, which are always of the same colour as the body; whereas a row of similar projections beneath continue perfectly white, notwithstanding any metamorphosis of the animal.

The general colour of the chameleon so long in my possession was a pleasant green, spotted with pale blue: from this it changed to a bright yellow, dark olive, and a dull green; but never appeared to such advantage as when irritated, or a dog approached it; the body was then considerably inflated, and the skin clouded like tortoise-shell, in shades of yellow, orange, green, and black. A black object always caused an almost instantaneous transformation: the room appropriated for its accommodation was skirted by a board painted black: this the chameleon carefully avoided; but if he accidentally drew near it, or we placed a black hat in his way, he was reduced to a hideous skeleton, and from the most lively tints became black as jet · on removing the cause, the effect as suddenly ceased, the sable hue was succeeded by a brilliant colouring, and the body was again inflated.

The Concan abounds with serpents, similar to those already described: one of the most dangerous is a long snake of a beautiful green, in form resembling the lash of a coach-whip, from whence it is called the whip-snake. This insidious animal conceals itself among the branches of trees, from whence it darts rapidly on the cattle grazing below, generally at the eye. One of them, near the hot-wells, flew at a bull; and wounding him in the eye, threw him into a violent agony; he tore up the ground in a furious manner, and foaming at the mouth, died in about half an hour.

Marre was the nearest Mahratta town of consequence to the hot-wells; by crossing the river, it was within a pleasant walk, and we made frequent excursions to an excavated mountain in its vicinity. Marre is fortified, large, and populous, the governor resided at Poonah, inattentive to the misery of the people, whom his duan, or deputy, oppressed in a cruel manner: indeed, the system of the Mahratta government is so uniformly oppressive, that it appears extraordinary to hear of a mild or equitable administration; venality and corruption guide the helm of state, and pervade the departments: if the sovereign requires money, the men in office, and governors of provinces, must supply it; the arbitrary monarch seldom inquires by what means it is procured: this affords them an opportunity of exacting a larger sum from their duans, who fleece the manufacturers and farmers to a still greater amount than they had furnished: thus the country is subjected to a general system of tyranny. From the great chieftains and nobles of the realm, to the humblest peasant in a village, neither the property nor the life of a subject can be called his own; all bow to the iron sceptre; having no law to protect them from oppression, no clement sovereign to redress their grievances. When Providence has blessed the land with the former and the latter rain, and the seed sown produces an hundred fold, the Indian ryot, conscious that the harvest may be reaped by other hands, cannot, like an English farmer, behold his ripening crops with joyful eyes, his cattle are in the same predicament, liable to be seized, without a compensation, for warlike service, or any other despotic mandate: money he must not be known to possess; if, by superior talent, or persevering in-

dustry, he should have accumulated a little more than his neighbours, he makes no improvements, lives no better than before, and through fear and distrust buries it in the earth, without informing his children of the concealment: this occasions the frequent discoveries of hidden treasure in Hindostan.

The excavated mountain is about a mile from the town of Marre, of great height, and difficult ascent; like the excavations at Salsette and the Elephanta, there are temples and habitations hewn out of the solid rock, whose origin is lost in fable, and the purposes of such laborious and expensive works are left to vague conjecture. The principal temple is sixty feet long, thirty broad, and ten in height: the roof and sides are not ornamented, but at the termination is a large image, seated on a throne, with a smaller figure on each side, and two mutilated animals under his feet; the light is admitted through a range of pillars, forming a grand entrance.

In one of these caverns, I met with an aged Senassee, under very strict vows of abstinence and austerity, which he had observed for many years among those subterraneous regions; with no other companion than a lark and a parroquet: fruit and water were, I believe, the only aliment of the family; nor was the head of it incumbered with furniture, apparel, or any of what are usually deemed the comforts of life: the people of Marre revered him for his sanctity, and religious Hindoos resorted to his cave from a great distance; his most constant visitors were the monkeys, who seemed in possession of all the surrounding territory.

Not far from these sacred caverns, was a spot set apart for swingers, a set of very extraordinary Hindoo

fanatics, to be met with in different parts of the country: particular villages are appropriated for this ceremony, where the swingers assemble at stated seasons. In the centre of an area, surrounded by numerous spectators, is erected a pole, from twenty to thirty feet in height, on which is placed a long horizontal beam, with a rope run over a pulley at the extremity: to this rope they fix an iron hook, which being drawn through the integuments of the devoted swinger, he is suspended aloft in the air, amidst the acclamations of the multitude: the longer he is capable of this painful exertion, and the more violently he swings himself round, the greater the merit: from the flesh giving way, the performer sometimes falls from his towering height, and breaks a limb, if he escape that accident, from the usual temperance of the Hindoos the wound soon heals: this penance is generally voluntary, in performance of a religious vow; or inflicted for the expiation of sins committed, either by himself, or some of his family.

In these excursions I saw a variety of tumblers and vaulters of a different description; being in general young Hindoo women, educated for the purpose, who travel in companies throughout Hindostan, and perform surprising feats of agility on the tight rope; turn themselves round with a girdle of drawn swords, on the top of a tall upright bamboo, and exhibit many other spectacles; while the elders of both sexes who accompany them, fill up the interludes by sleight of hand, uncommonly dexterous and entertaining. Sometimes a set of people, more resembling the combatants in an ancient gymnasium, exhibit athletic exercises to the assembled crowds: they generally perform in the

large court of a durbar, or some open place selected for the purpose.

At one of these exhibitions in the Concan, where a prodigious number of spectators surrounded the square, four *pelwans*, or combatants, suddenly entered from the left side, with a brisk bounding step, and a shrill yell, or shriek, peculiar to themselves, something like that uttered by the Bheels and wild mountaineers, when they make their sudden attacks: they were dressed alike in white turbans and short drawers, with a strong cotton sash, bound tight several times round the loins, and passing between the thighs: their turbans were ornamented with chaplets of mogrees and champahs, and their wrists with bracelets of other fragrant flowers: they were all large full-bodied men, not remarkably tall; after a few manœuvres they made a respectful salam to the company, and retired. Presently after four other men, who, we were informed, were to be their antagonists, came in from the opposite side of the area: these were tall, lank, and bony, with much darker complexions, and a graver deportment than the former. One of each set appeared to be a youth of nineteen, the three others from thirty to forty years of age. These also having made their obeisance, withdrew; and were succeeded by an old man, who it seems was a celebrated teacher of the gymnastic art, and received a pension from the Mahratta government for that purpose: he was received with great respect by the populace, and by a profound reverence from the eight combatants on re-entering the area from their respective portals. The contest, which lasted a long time, consisted of wrestling, boxing, and similar feats: in boxing, one hand was guarded by a case of horn or

wood, with a convex protuberance over every knuckle: they commenced the attack by raising the hand unarmed in the attitude of beckoning; with the other they strike desperate blows, particularly at the fingers of their antagonists, when attempting to catch hold of them.

After a few weeks' residence at Fort Victoria and the hot-wells, I joined two other gentlemen on a journey from thence to Bombay: I rode on horseback; being invalids, they travelled in palankeens: our retinue consisted of more than fourscore persons, besides horses and pack-bullocks. This number of attendants for only three Europeans, may appear extraordinary to those who have never been in India; but they were all indispensably necessary in a country where no caravansary, or house of refreshment, is to be met with; a traveller must therefore carry every thing with him, even a bed and kitchen utensils, which renders an Indian journey troublesome and expensive.

The distance from the hot-wells to Mandava, where we embarked for Bombay, was one hundred and thirty miles; yet from necessity it could not be accomplished in less than four days. We commenced our journey at sun-rise, the latter end of May, and after three hours halted at a Mahratta village; unable to procure a house for our accommodation, or to find one shady tree, we sheltered ourselves under a corn rick, which, until the hot-winds blew, was more eligible than a low cottage; as the stacks of corn in the Concan are generally fixed upon a platform of bamboos, supported by strong poles, seven or eight feet from the ground; this being open on all sides underneath, sheltered us from the scorching rays of the sun, and afforded a free

circulation of air; which we enjoyed until noon, when the hot-winds set in, and blew violently for many hours: clouds of dust, burning like the ashes of a furnace, continually overwhelmed us; and we were often surrounded by the little whirlwinds called bugulas, or devils; a name not ill applied to their peculiar characteristics of heat, activity, and mischief.

We left that uncomfortable situation early in the afternoon, and travelling through a parched country, reached the village of Candhar, soon after sun-set: here a friendly banian-tree afforded us all ample accommodation; we supped and slept under its verdant canopy, with more comfort than in the best house in the village. Near Candhar the country was well cultivated, and watered by a serpentine river: the stream so late in the season, was narrow and frequently fordable: during the rainy months it fills an ample bed, which was now adorned with a plant called *jewassee*, from which they make the tattas, or screens, fixed in bamboo frames, and placed round the verandas and apartments exposed to the sun. these screens constantly supplied with water trickling in small streams, admit a cool refreshing air, when the exterior atmosphere is in a glow of heat. The beds of many Indian rivers abound with the jewassee, as also with a beautiful shrub named kuseernee, very much resembling a small cypress tree.

Candhar, eighteen miles from the wells, is pleasantly situated on the banks of the river; and a place of considerable trade; being a great thoroughfare from the sea coast to the Gaut mountains. We met there a number of vanjarrahs, or merchants, with large droves of oxen, laden with valuable articles from the interior

country to commute for salt on the sea-coast: immense caravans of oxen are employed in the salt trade, in this part of India; where there are no roads for wheel carriages, and all merchandize is transported by these useful animals: especially up the steep ascents and difficult passes of the Gaut mountains, which bound the Concan to the eastward; from whence commences the Deccan, an extent of fertile plains on their summit, containing popular cities, towns, and villages, situated in a fine climate, surrounded by nature's choicest bounties. In some parts this tract is called the Balla-Gaut, or high mountains; to distinguish them from the lower Gaut nearer the sea, and connecting with the Concan.

These Gauts, or Appenines of the East, extend from Cape Comorin to Surat, through thirteen degrees of latitude, in some parts only forty or fifty miles from the sea, in others seventy: their rise is frequently gradual, but all their summits are lofty, and generally visible many leagues at sea This stupendous barrier occasions the phenomenon of summer and winter, or the wet and dry seasons, to be directly opposite in places exactly in the same latitude, separated only by these mountains, sometimes within a few miles of each other. The diversity of seasons is caused by the monsoons which blow alternately on the coast of Malabar and Coromandel, collecting the clouds, and carrying them towards these alpine regions; where being arrested in their progress, they become condensed, and refresh the plains with abundant showers, to forward cultivation, and insure a harvest. On the western side of the peninsula, the south-west monsoon continues this blessing, in a greater or less degree

from June to October: the north-east moonsoon then commences on the coast of Coromandel, and produces those fructifying rains over the whole country to the east of the Gauts. In Bengal and the northern provinces of Hindostan, where the mountainous regions no longer exist, the south-west monsoon extends its influence, and wafts health and plenty to the "paradise of nations."

Early the next morning we proceeded on our journey by torch-light, and travelled for some hours, through a barren rocky country; after sun-rise we entered a cultivated plain, encircled by verdant hills, forming a pastoral landscape; enlivened by villages, and a busy peasantry. Before ten o'clock the intense heat compelled us to halt at Cotar, a village on the banks of Choule river; where we found a number of travellers, and droves of oxen, refreshing themselves under a mango grove: we joined their party, and after a slight repast enjoyed a comfortable repose, until the declining sun permitted us to continue our route along the delightful banks of Choule river, winding through a populous and cultivated country, protected by two Mahratta fortresses on the hills.

Several of these small towns and villages were adorned with Mahomedan tombs and mosques, in a good style of architecture; like the Hindoo temples, they were covered with a coat of fine chunam, in whiteness and brilliancy equalling the purest marble, or porcelaine, which it most resembles: these polished domes form a striking contrast to the mango and banian-trees, by which they are sourrounded.

The Mahomedan mausoleums generally stand in a garden of pomegranates and custard apple-trees, which

take off from the gloom of a cemetery: the Hindoo temples in the Concan are also frequently surrounded by a garden, sometimes of singular beauty. The brahmins evince as much taste and judgment in the situation of their seminaries and temples, as the monks in the disposition of abbeys and priories in England; where some of the most lovely spots are still graced by their ruins. In this respect the monkish and brahminical taste exactly corresponds: to the latter, shade and water are indispensably necessary, although, contrary to the general restrictions of the monastic life, the Concan shades are enlivened by the songs and dances of the female choristers appropriated to the temples, the number of Brahmins engaged in their religious rites, and the concourse of people assembled to morning worship. Nor are these gardens deficient in flowers, fruit, and vegetables, the latter indeed compose the principal part of the brahmin's food; their best orchards contain guavas, plantains, jambos, and every variety of Indian fruit; with grapes, figs, and mulberries: superior grapes, oranges, peaches, and apples, are supplied from Poonah and Aurungabad, in the Deccan. The whole country produces mangos and tamarinds: the mango season in the Concan commences in April, and ends soon after the heavy rains fall in June: the best grape season in the Deccan is from March till June.

The most productive gardens in the Concan are on the banks of rivers, and in the beds of nullahs, or rivulets, which run from the mountains. In these situations, at the beginning of February, they sow the seeds of musk and water-melons, cucumbers, gourds, and pumpkins in great variety. these continue to sup-

ply their tables until the flurries, which generally precede the rainy season; then, on the first swelling of the rivers, the villagers take a licence to rob and plunder the plantations, to the great detriment of the owner. They have two excellent sorts of pumpkin, the red and white; and a profusion of beans and vegetables, indigenous to this part of India.

Many of the rivers in the rainy season abound with good fish: the bheinslah, in general appearance and flavour, resembles the carp, having a large mouth, without teeth, and strong scales; they weigh from fifteen to twenty pounds: the poatlah is of a similar kind, but smaller. The sewrah is an excellent fish, without scales; it has a large mouth, several rows of teeth, and weighs ten or twelve pounds There are five or six other sorts of fish in those waters, whose Hindoo names are of no consequence, and I am not icthyologist sufficient to know where to class them: they also abound with cat-fish, and very good eels.

I did not observe any wheat or cotton fields in the Concan; in the upper country both are cultivated: our journey was not indeed in the season to see many crops on the ground: as the rice, juarree, and most other grains, are sown at the beginning of the rainy season, in ground already prepared for the purpose: and during the fair intervals of the wet months they plow for wheat, gram, pease, and other articles, which are sown in October and reaped in February: the wheat thrives best in ground wherein nothing has been produced the preceding year: for gram and pease, which are sown broad cast, low rice-grounds, and other wet places are prefered: for all the rest the drill is used. The juarree generally springs out of the earth

on the fifth or sixth day; about a fortnight afterwards it is weeded by a machine called coalpah, and the operation repeated in ten or fifteen days.

At the earliest dawn of morning in all the Hindoo towns and villages, the hand-mills are at work; when the menials and widows grind meal sufficient for the daily consumption of the family. There is a windmill at Bombay for grinding corn, but I do not recollect seeing another in India; where the usual method of grinding is with mill-stones, and always performed by women, who resume their task every morning: especially the forlorn Hindoo widows, divested of every ornament, and with their heads shaved, degraded to almost a state of servitude. Very similar must have been the custom in Judea, from the pathetical lamentation of the prophet, alluding to this very circumstance: "Come down, and sit in the dust, O virgin daughter of Babylon; sit on the ground, O daughter of the Chaldeans, for thou shalt no more be called tender and delicate: take the mill-stones and grind meal; sit thou silent, and get thee into darkness, O daughter of the Chaldeans, for thou shalt no more be called the lady of kingdoms."—Isaiah xlvii, v. 1, 2, 5. Thus when the Hindoo female, who had perhaps been the pride and ornament of the family, is humbled on the death of her husband, it is not surprising to see her prefer his funeral pile to such a state of degradation; and we must cast the mantle of charity over the young virgin-widow, who infringes the celibacy imposed on her by such cruel and impolitic laws.

Soon after the day closed, we forded the Choule river, and arrived at Ustom, a considerable village at some distance from its banks, which we found a great inconvenience; all the wells and tanks being ex-

hausted, except one belonging to a mosque still further: thither we repaired to pass the night, and the fakeer who had the care of it, allotted one of the largest tombs for our accommodation. These are often elegant structures of marble, or polished chunam; consisting either of a dome supported by columns, or a sepulchral chamber with only one entrance to the tomb, generally placed in the centre under the dome: it was one of the latter to which we were conducted; but the stagnated air, and disagreeable smell of the bats, soon compelled us to retreat to a clump of custard-apple trees, where we lighted fires, dressed a curry, and enjoyed a sound repose amid the graves of departed Mussulmans.

We at break of day continued our journey through a pleasant cultivated part of the Concan, a great thoroughfare from the low country to Poonah, which was the residence of the Brahmin peshwa, and the resort of all castes of Brahmins; especially the Gurus, a very select body of priests, of the highest dignity and authority in the brahminical hierarchy; in some respects similar to the bishops and archbishops in the Christian church; as they travel through their respective dioceses, at stated seasons, to visit the inferior priests, and administer particular rites at the Hindoo temples. Those of the greatest sanctity make more extensive pilgrimages, to perform the upaseyda, and other solemn ceremonies in their seminaries and sacred groves. The Guru is reputed a being of so holy a nature, that he is not only venerated, but worshipped when he appears in public: on some occasions their splendid processions unite the insignia of oriental grandeur, with the fascinating charms of the Hindoo religion, bearing a great resemblance to the former magnificence of th

sovereign pontiff on the great festivals of the church of Rome. These sacred shrines are frequently visited by female senassees, brahmacharrees, and other devotees, who have entered into religious vows, and are highly respected: many of these devout women, as also of the Gurus and exalted Brahmins, are supposed to have arrived at such perfection and purity, as to be actually an incarnation of the deity, and consequently an object of worship.

So much sanctity is annexed to the Gurus, that all of inferior caste to the Brahmins are expected to retire from the road when he passes by in public procession, that the air may retain its purity, unpolluted by plebeian breath. We met one of these Brahmins of consequence, and whatever might be his sacerdotal or civil station, humility of spirit was not his prevailing characteristic, if we may judge from the pompous titles, and high-sounding praises ascribed to him by the chopdais and heralds: for, like other great men, he had these precursors, and a number of pioneers to clear the road, and "make his paths straight," by removing obstacles, and filling up the ravines and the hollow-ways in his route. All eastern potentates affect these distinctions, nor do they ever travel without their heralds and pioneers: from the poorest Hindoo rajah and Mahomedan nabob of a province, to the emperor himself; who in the days of Mogul splendour, vied with Semiramis in her progress through Media and Persia: in which, according to Diodorus, when rocks or precipices impeded the royal traveller, they were ordered to be removed: hills and mountains were levelled, and valleys filled up, for the accommodation of this mighty potentate: finely illustrating the figura-

tive language on the approach of the PRINCE OF PEACE, when "every valley was to be exalted, and every mountain and hill be made low, to make straight in the desert a high way for the LORD"—Isaiah, ch. xl. v. 3, 4.

There are many celebrated temples in the Concan, but still more above the Gauts, where in some the revenues and establishment of the priesthood are enormous: one temple in the Deccan formerly maintained forty thousand officiating Brahmins; who with the dancing-girls dedicated to the deities, and the other expensive ceremonies of the Hindoo religion, must have consumed an immense income. The Hindoo deities are literally innumerable: in a note to Dr. Tennant's valuable publication, they are said to be thirty crore; which, in round numbers, exceeds three hundred millions: the Brahmins instruct the other castes to worship them, although they themselves do not believe in polytheism, and only worship the Supreme Being, as the great mysterious OM; and the creating, preserving, and destroying attributes, in Brahma, Vishnoo, and Seeva. Allowing the Brahmins, and a comparative few of the higher orders, to be enlightened by a purer system of religion, the lower classes of society are condemned to a state of ignorance in religion, art, and science

The Gurus have great power: but the ordinary Brahmins have taken care to reserve a sufficient portion for themselves, sanctioned and enforced by the code of Menu. At Poonah, the secular Brahmins occupy all the important stations; especially the lucrative office called Jeiram Bopput; a sort of censor, whose province it is to collect fines, which under the authority of the minister, he imposes arbitrarily

on deviations from brahminical purity; drinking, domestic and family quarrels amongst the high and rich classes of society: this he manages with the greatest extortion and injustice. This officer is frequently summoned at the pleasure of the minister, and fined; which has eventually the effect of multiplying his abuses, by way of reparation for the mulct he has been obliged to bear; these are again connived at by his superiors, that he may enrich himself sufficiently to answer the call of the minister, as occasion may require.

As the hot-winds commenced their fury, we reached the village of Ç̣houna; a spot endeared to travellers by a spreading banian-tree, and a well of excellent water; no less attractive in India, than the Maison-rouge at Frankfort, or the vineyards of Monte Fiascone, to the European tourist. Running streams had hitherto refreshed us when we happily stopped on their banks; but a good well had not yet fallen to our lot: on the contrary, at Ustam, and most other villages, the water was so muddy as to be scarcely drinkable: and even this unpleasant beverage was so scanty, that we often saw the women wait several hours at a small hole in the earth, to collect sufficient to fill a jar: It is only in the months of April and May, just before the first fall of rain, that this scarcity prevails; during that sultry season, of most brooks and rivers it may be said, "dumb are their fountains, and their channels dry."

The commendation of an ancient patriarch who dug a well, must not be thought too trivial a circumstance for the sacred records: he could not have bestowed a greater charity in a parched and thirsty soil: the fre-

quent allusions to living streams, flowing rivers, verdant banks, and shady fountains, were delightful to the natives of Palestine: no prospect more enchanting, no promise more alluring, than to "feed in a green pasture, and repose beside the still waters:" Psalm xxiii. 2. A good well and umbrageous banian-tree, are the most desirable objects to a traveller in Hindostan; since, on account of the peculiarities of caste, and the variety of religious professions, although an European carry his own provisions, very few of the natives will allow him to enter their house to eat them. This indeed is not to be expected among a superstitious people; who, like the Pharisees of old, make clean the outside of the cup and the platter, while they neglect the weightier matters of the law; who regard, with scrupulous exactness, eating or drinking with an inferior caste, the performance of stated ablutions, and bodily purifications: when, if by any accident, a Hindoo tastes food forbidden to his caste, or touches what is deemed impure, he is subjected to the severest penance, or perhaps degraded from his rank in society; while the same man may be guilty of falsehood, perjury, and the most immoral actions, with impunity.

Having refreshed our bearers and cattle, we pursued our journey across an arid plain towards the Lower Gauts; a chain of mountains separating the broad valley through which we were travelling, from the Concan plains reaching to the sea. This part of India during the rainy months, is doubtless a perfect garden; but at the end of the dry season its general aspect is very different: although in mentioning a parched country or barren plains in Hindostan, I by no means liken them to the burning deserts of Persia and Arabia.

The general aspect of Hindostan, excepting the sandy plains on the borders of Cashemire, and the deserted country near the Indus, presents a scene of lofty mountains and woody hills, skirting a champaign, irrigated by rivers, or artificial streams, which with the tanks and wells, were the noblest works of former princes: the Emperor Firose, in the fourteenth century, made a canal of a hundred miles in length, and cut channels from the Jumna and other rivers, to supply distant towns with water, and facilitate the inland commerce of his dominions.

With great difficulty and fatigue we ascended the Lower Gauts; only called so in comparison with the stupendous barrier of the Deccan, on the eastern side of the Concan plains: our guides mistook the proper route, and bewildered us in a wild and savage scene: no sooner had we attained the summit of what we imagined the highest mountain, than one still higher reared its majestic head, and thus continued in long succession: fortunately, during the extreme heat of noon, the woods and rocks afforded a friendly shade. We at length accomplished the arduous task, and hailed the western sea with delight Descending by a narrow pass, we entered the lower part of the Concan, through rocks, woods, and glens; the haunts of tigers, hyenas, and serpents.

On entering Ram-Rajah, the first town in the low country, we were welcomed by a venerable Mahomedan, who, like Abraham, was sitting at his gate to receive strangers: his snowy beard reached to his girdle; his countenance inspired reverence and love: an urbanity and courtesy marked a distinguished character; and his whole behaviour evinced a superior knowledge of

the world. He conducted us to the portico of his house, where we saw him surrounded by many branches of his children and grandchildren, dwelling under the same roof: the females did not appear; but, in all respects, as far as oriental manners and religious tenets permitted, he entertained us with the greatest hospitality, and exhibited a striking picture of the patriarchal age. We dined in a garden refreshed by fountains, surrounded with flowers, and shaded by caringe trees, whose purple blossoms, in rich festoons, diffused a sweet perfume: the fruit affords a delicate lamp oil The cassia-fistula, a tree of nearly equal beauty, abounds in this country; exclusive of the medicinal value of the fruit, the blossoms are fragrant and clustering, it is esteemed among the sacred trees of the Hindoos, who erect altars, and offer flowery sacrifices under its shade to Mariatalee and the sylvan deities.

Our venerable friend at Ram Rajah was one of the most respectable Mahomedans I ever knew; although greatly advanced in age, he retained all his faculties, and had not lost the cheerfulness of youth. As longevity among the Indians is not common, neither is it, perhaps, very desirable; when declining years render the superior classes of Asiatics incapable of enjoying the ambitious, avaricious, and sensual pleasures, which in their estimation comprise the *summum bonum* of life, with minds untaught by learning and experience, unstored by science and literature, and uncheered by a warm and benevolent religion, they have no relish for those calm delights which soften the declining path of the pious Christian, and gild the rays of his setting sun; the Christian possessing a

mind at peace with God, the world, and himself; encircled by a loving and beloved offspring, to "rock the cradle of declining age."

The Mahomedans, in power, are generally intolerant and cruel, bigoted to the theism of their own system, they treat all other religions with a sort of contemptuous abhorrence, and we may safely pronounce them cold and uncharitable in their religious opinions: the Hindoo character, though very different, is in many essential points extremely defective, and leads by deep-rooted prejudice and barbarous custom, to the commission of crimes, which ought not to be sanctioned by any moral or religious code. Unlike our patriarchal friend at Ram Rajah, or the venerable Christian, how often is the aged Hindoo parent deemed an encumbrance and unnecessary expense by his family, and carried a living victim, devoted to die, on the margin of the Ganges, or some holy stream, there his own children fill his mouth and nostrils with mud, and thus cutting off every prospect of recovery, they leave the author of their being to be carried away by the stream, as food for alligators and vultures. Although sanctioned by the Brahmins, and perhaps sometimes voluntary on the part of the aged victim, no religion should tolerate such a sacrifice: that it is not always voluntary, we have many undeniable proofs: but the fatal consequence of not submitting to this extraordinary viaticum, or of eluding its effect by returning to his family, in case of a rescue or recovery, is so provided for by the Brahminical laws, that death is far more desirable than the continuance of life on such terms: many instances might be produced to confirm this assertion.

Captain Williamson remarks, that "when a person

has been taken to the side of the Ganges, or other substituted water, under the supposition that he is dying, he is, in the eye of the Hindoo law, dead: his property passes to his heir, or according to his bequest; and in the event of recovery, the poor fellow becomes an outcast · not a soul, not even his own children, will eat with him, or afford him the least accommodation: if by chance they come in contact, ablution must instantly follow. The wretched survivor from that time is holden in abhorrence, and has no other resort, but to associate himself in a village inhabited solely by persons under similar circumstances. There are but few such receptacles; the largest, and most conspicuous, is on the banks of the Mullah, which passes near Sooksongah, about forty miles north of Calcutta."

Cruel indeed are these mandates of ignorance and superstition! and yet, so contradictory and unaccountable is human nature, even in men of the very same nation and caste, that, notwithstanding this treatment of their aged and infirm parents by the natives of Bengal, I can with pleasure and with truth record, that the generality of Indians, of whatever religious profession, whether Hindoos, Mahomedans, or Parsees, pay a great respect and deference to age: the hoary head is by them considered "a crown of glory." in the public courts of justice, as in scenes of domestic life, I have witnessed with delight the pious Brahmin and the experienced Mullah, informing the members of the adawlet, or instructing their youthful pupils; who looked up with veneration to "days that should speak, and multitude of years that should teach wisdom; they waited for their words, and gave ear to their reasons." Job, ch. xxxii v. 7, 11.

The hospitality of our venerable host at Ram Rajah, detained us longer than we intended; the day was closing when we left his friendly shade, and proceeded towards Alla-Bhaug, a Mahratta town at a considerable distance; as the country was marshy, and the roads bad, we had no prospect of reaching it before midnight, and therefore dispatched a horseman to purchase provisions, and provide accommodations, before the inhabitants should retire to rest

On approaching the town at that unseasonable hour, we were met by an officer and a troop of Mahratta cavalry, preceded by *mussulchees*, or torch-bearers, who announced the approach of the *duan*, or minister of Ragoojee Angria, the Mahratta chieftain, to whom that territory belonged: he soon made his appearance, with a splendid retinue, and attended us to the durbar; where we were treated with the most polite and kind attentions, seated on embroidered cushions, strewed with flowers, and refreshed by servants fanning us with punkas of *coos* grass, cooled with rose-water. Our beds and equipage not being arrived, we were abundantly supplied by our host: while kids, poultry, rice, butter, milk, and vegetables were consigned to the kitchen for our supper; pine-apples, mangos, custard-apples, and pomegranates, were spread before us in the durbar, with wreaths of mogrees, and nosegays of roses and jessamine. When supper was served, the duan and his attendants retired, that we might eat it without restraint, and enjoy the repose we so much wanted. This hospitality extended to our servants and cattle; all were amply provided for according to their respective castes and professions.

On expressing our grateful acknowledgments for

these friendly attentions, the minister informed us, that his chieftain, Ragojee Angria, was in the secret friendship of the English, and had the greatest respect for our nation: having heard we were passing through his country, he ordered every thing necessary to be prepared against our arrival at Alla-Bhaug, and intended to pay us a visit on the following morning, if we could postpone our journey. It may not be unnecessary to remark, that one of our party was a colonel in the army; myself and the other gentleman held respectable posts in the civil service; which made us travellers of some consequence among people who pay great deference to rank and station.

Ragojee Angria resided at *Colabie*, a fortified island half a mile from Alla Bhaug, in which were the palace, treasury, and other public buildings, but the stables, gardens, and larger edifices, were at Alla-Bhaug; the former contained a noble stud of Persian and Arabian horses, elephants, and camels, and every thing about the durbar was in a princely style.

At nine o'clock Ragojee came from Colabie, mounted on a large elephant, richly caparisoned: the duan followed on horseback, and the procession consisted of several state elephants, led horses, camels carrying the large drums, trumpeters, and other musicians, a select detachment of cavalry, and a body guard of infantry. On dismounting from the elephant, Ragojee's chopdars, or heralds, proclaimed his titles, and conducted him with great state to the durbar, where the duan presented us in form; he embraced each with a smiling countenance, and sat down on a cushion prepared for his reception: he then sprinkled rose-water, decked us with wreaths of mogrees, and concluded his visit by a

present of muslin and keemcab; pieces of satin, with gold and silver flowers: these ceremonies, and some general political conversation, occupied about an hour, when the prince re-ascended his moving castle, and returned in the same state to Colabie.

Ragojee was splendidly dressed in a muslin vest, and drawers of crimson and gold keemcab; his turban and sash were of purple muslin, the former adorned with sprigs of diamonds and rubies, and a very valuable emerald, from his neck depended two rows of beautiful pearls, sustaining a cluster of diamonds· his ear rings, according to the Hindoo costume, were four large pearls, and as many transparent perforated rubies, on gold rings two or three inches in diameter: he wore a rich bracelet on his right arm; the handle of his catarra, or short dagger, was studded with jewels, the hilt of his broad sword plain gold. He appeared about forty years of age; of a comely person, pleasing countenance, and princely manners.

This Mahratta chieftain was of the same family with Conajee Angria, the celebrated pirate, so long the terror of the European and Indian vessels trading on the *Malabar coast, until the conquest of Ghereah by* Admiral Watson and Lord Clive. Ragojee, as one of the tributary Rajahs, paid the Mahratta government two lacs of rupees annually, he held his lands on a military tenure, and furnished a supply of troops similar to the feudal system which formerly prevailed in Europe. Some Europeans, who had deserted into his service, informed us he was generally beloved by his people, and less oppressive than the other Mahratta princes: these men were married and settled in the

country, and made themselves useful in the artillery department.

The duan's name was Govindsett, a pundit of the banian caste, a man of good character, and considerable abilities: to him Ragojee entrusted the whole management of his revenue and disbursements: they were of the same age, and having been brought up together, a confidential friendship, uncommon in India, had subsisted between them from the earliest period: in the course of their education, Ragojee observing their different pursuits, promised when he attained the government, and followed the profession of arms, Govindsett should be his duan, or prime minister: the latter shrewdly replied, that, according to the usual custom of princes, Govindsett would be forgotten when Ragojee became surrounded by the insignia of royalty, but no sooner were the days of mourning for his father accomplished, than the young sovereign promoted his favourite to the highest honours and gave him the management of his treasury.

After an early dinner, we pursued our journey towards that part of the coast from whence we were to embark for Bombay. In the course of conversation during Ragojee's visit, he politely observed, that as our servants and cattle might be fatigued by the distance and heat of the weather, he hoped we would accept of his own palanquins, horses, and camels, to the water-side, and an armed vessel to convey us to Bombay: we declined all except the latter; and accompanied only by Govindsett and his suite, we proceeded, at his particular desire, to a dewal, or temple

which he had lately erected, in a better style of architecture than any I had then seen in India. It consisted of two separate temples: the outer one a square, well proportioned, covered by a large dome, and adorned at each corner by an elegant turret. the roof of the further temple was embellished by a lofty spire, composed of cupolas, gradually diminishing to the summit, with appropriate ornaments to produce a general effect. The outer temple was dedicated to public worship, the inner exclusively to the Brahmins, who washed and dressed the idols, richly adorned with jewels, and ornamented with flowers; amongst them the nymphea lotos was most conspicuous In front of these temples a spacious area contained a tank lined with hewn stone for the ablutions of the worshippers, with a handsome obelisk at each corner, illuminated on the great festivals: for such illuminations are as common amongst the Hindoos, as with the ancient Egyptians, or modern Chinese. the surrounding groves were enlivened by dancing-girls and musicians; and, far from any appearance of austerity or mortification, the brahmins at Govindsett's temple seemed to partake of every terrestrial enjoyment: the dancing-girls and Hindoo women at the tank and fountains were of the most delicate order, although their own personal appearance indicated no self-denial in the article of food· on the contrary, they were all as fat and sleek as rice and ghee could make them; and reminded me of a curious remark in Orme's Oriental Fragments, that "the Brahmins have made their gods require, besides the necessity of endowing their temples, the practice of all other kinds of charities, by which the necessities

of human nature may be relieved. A third part of the wealth of every Hindoo is expended on such occasions. The brahmins themselves profess great hospitality, and by this address preserve that extreme veneration, which otherwise would be lost through the effects of envy, in a detestation of their impositions. A very strange custom prevails in some parts of India: a brahmin devotes himself to death, by eating until he expires with the surfeit; it is no wonder that superstition is convinced of the necessity of cramming the priest, when he professes to eat like a cormorant through a principal of religion."

The dewal was encircled by groves and fountains, among flowers, fruits, and a variety of aromatic shrubs so much esteemed in India: the extensive lake was covered with the nymphea, waving its lovely blossoms of azure, white, and rose-colour, to every motion of the breeze. This oriental beauty is often mentioned by the ancients: it was as much a favourite with the Egyptians as with the Hindoos; the former considered it an object of religious veneration, the latter offer it in sacrifice, and as a decoration in their temples Herodotus mentions a people called Lotophagi, who lived entirely upon the fruit of the lotos, of what species I cannot determine, as the fruit was the size of the mastic, and sweet like the date, from which they also made wine. He says the Egyptians eat the root of the plant, which was of a pleasant flavour; and from the flour of the seed they made bread. These properties of the nymphea, and the rhamnus lotus of Linnæus, are confirmed by Pliny, and may possibly be known in some countries at this day. Athenæus, in

his Deipnosophist, quotes a description of the Lybean lotos, from Polybius, which was used as food by the natives.

The temple, lake, and gardens, at Alla-Bhaug, presented an excellent specimen of modern oriental magnificence, and evinced the taste and liberality of the munificent founder: on alluding to the immense expense of such an undertaking, Govindsitt made a reply which sensibly affected us: "By the blessing of Providence, and the generosity of my sovereign, I have been promoted to honour, and accumulated wealth, sufficient for present enjoyment, and the future provision of my family. In dedicating this temple and sacred groves for public worship, with the gardens, tanks and fountains, which I have made for general ablution and refreshment in a sultry climate, I trust I have not only offered an acceptable sacrifice to the benevolent deity, and bestowed a useful charity on my fellow-creatures; but, from the changes incidental to mortality, the sun of prosperity may decline, and the clouds of adversity gather over my posterity; and then my children's children may derive a benefit from what now so highly gratifies their father's heart."

In this scene of mutability such changes are no where uncommon; but the rapid revolutions of wealth and power in Asia, gave double energy to the speech of this benevolent Hindoo: distinction of caste and profession vanished; and we cordially united with a heart of sensibility, replete with piety to God, and love to man!

Our ride from Govindsett's temple, to the place of embarkation for Bombay, offered nothing interesting: he took leave at his garden-gate, ordering a party of horse to escort us to the sea-port, and an officer to ac-

company us in the vessel, to inform him of our arrival at Bombay. They conducted us several miles over the salt-marshes, and passing through the Mahratta town of Tull we arrived late in the evening at Mandava, a small place in sight of the island of Bombay, from whence we were to embark on the following morning.

Notwithstanding we were under the protection of Ragojee's escort, the Hindoos of Mandava, fearful of contamination, would afford us no better accommodation than a cow house; where we dressed our supper, and passed the night. To this humble roof, by order of the officers, the villagers brought poultry, butter, fruit, and vegetables, with fuel and earthen pots in abundance, which we were not permitted to pay for: this diminished our enjoyment of a repast obtained by oppression and consequently repugnant to the feelings of an Englishman. No murmur reached our ears, but we knew from our servants, that it was not accompanied by the blessing of those from whom menace and compulsion obtained it.

Lady Wortley Montague remarks, that when the Turkish bashas travel, themselves, and their numerous retinue, not content with eating all that is to be eaten belonging to the peasants, exact what they call teeth-money, a contribution for the use of their teeth, worn with doing them the honour of devouring their meat. This humane writer, in her entertaining Letters from Turkey, was compelled to be an innocent partaker of similar oppressions: and the story related by Baron de Tott, with a degree of humour which in some measure diminishes the cruelty of Ali Aga, his mikmindar, or conductor, I have seen frequently realized, from the whip to the cinnamon, during my own travels in India.

The Baron travelling in Moldavia, on an embassy to the Cham of the Tartars, at the expense of the Turkish government, would willingly have paid the Greek peasants for his supply of provisions, but that was not permitted: and so liable were they to such pillage, that they generally denied having the articles. At one place where the usual supply was demanded, the head of the village pretending he did not understand the Turkish language, the mikmindar knocked him down, and kicked him until he began to complain in good Turkish of being thus beaten. When it was well known the villagers were poor people, often in want of necessaries, and whose princes scarcely left them the air they breathed: "Pshaw! thou art joking friend," replied Ali Aga, "thou art in want of nothing, except of being well basted a little oftener; but all in good time: proceed we now to business. I must instantly have two sheep, a dozen of fowls, a dozen of pigeons, fifty pounds of bread, twelve pounds of butter, with salt, pepper, nutmegs, cinnamon, lemons, wine, salad, and good oil of olive; all in great plenty." The Moldavian replied with tears, "I have already told you that we are poor creatures, without so much as bread to eat, where then must we get cinnamon?" On this the conductor took his whip, and flogged the poor Moldavian until he could bear it no longer: when finding Ali Aga inexorable, and that the provisions must be produced, he ran off; and in less than a quarter of an hour, the primate of the village, assisted by three of his countrymen, brought all the provisions required, not forgetting even the cinnamon.

The transaction at Mandava, which gave rise to these observations, concluded our adventures: the

next morning we embarked for Bombay, and arrived there in a few hours: on taking leave, we offered our conductors a present, which they respectfully refused; saying their prince's favour was beyond any other consideration, and they should forfeit it by accepting our bounty.

This was my first journey on the continent of India; I found it replete with novelty and entertainment: as a country, which, perhaps, precedes Egypt as the nurse of science, and by its arts, manufactures, and valuable productions, has contributed from time immemorial to the comfort and luxury of other civilized nations.

Aromatic gales and spicy groves; trees adorned by Flora and Pomona; pellucid lakes and murmuring fountains; charm in poetical descriptions: we wish to dwell in such delightful scenes. A residence in the torrid zone convinces us of their fallacy: hot-winds, and arid plains, unrefreshed by a cooling breeze or living spring, annoy the Asiatic traveller: and admitting the existence of such pleasures in the temperate climate and fertile provinces of Hindostan, we know from experience, that a constant possession of the loveliest objects, often renders them insipid: the revolving seasons and variety of Europe, seem more congenial to an Englishmen than the luxurious monotony of India, even in its most pleasing form.

In the court of an Asiatic sovereign we look in vain for true magnanimity: the nobles approach him with distrust and fear, conscious that his frown deprives them of life; nor can they, on so frail a tenure, enjoy wealth or honours: those in the middle walk of life, instead of being subject to one tyrant, are oppressed by numerous petty despots, who, dead to every feeling

of humanity, rule them with a rod of iron. The lower classes of ryots, or husbandmen, are not in a more enviable situation; the despotic system pervades all ranks, and whole villages emigrate in the vain hope of finding a more equitable government: they have not indeed much to leave; their cottages being generally built of mud, and their furniture only a few mats and earthen pots.

In travelling, it is easy to distinguish the ancient inhabitants from those whom conquest or commerce have dispersed throughout Hindostan; not so much in complexion and outward appearance, as in the peculiarities of character: the Mahomedan is comparatively bold, enterprizing, and resolute; the Hindoo tender, humane, and timid: this distinction may in part be attributed to the mildness of the climate and difference of food, but still more to the doctrine of transmigration; since a religion, which teaches them that the dearest connexions they once enjoyed on earth, may, on the system of the metempsychosis, now animate the mortal form of a bird, beast, or insect, not only inspires them with horror at the idea of shedding blood, but, in a great measure, prevents every kind of cruelty

In this part of my letters, youthful imagination, and enthusiastic patriotism, heightened by distance from the beloved object, led me to draw a long comparison between the inhabitants of Britain and India. Warmed by the amor patriæ, I pursued the delightful theme from Windsor's royal towers, to the palaces of the nobles, villas of the opulent, commercial sea-ports, manufacturing towns, cheerful villages, farms, and hamlets: I traced the munificent endowments for art

and science: from her splendid universities to the parochial schools. It was a picture, which in a distant clime and secluded situation, delighted the heart, and animated my endeavours to secure a competence, that I might the sooner enjoy those unspeakable blessings.

CHAPTER X.

Voyage from Bombay to Surat—Surat Bar—Ancient Trade of India with Europe—Diamond Mines and Jewels of India—City of Surat—Gardens—Mode of Watering—Haram—Mogul Women—Hummums, Champooing—Banian Hospital—Manufactures—Trade of Surat with Europe—Visit of the English Chief to the Nabob—Nabob's Public Procession to the Mosque—Dress of the Mogul Ladies—Anecdote of a Mogul Widow and an English Gentleman—Country—Cultivation—Game—Birds—Wild Beasts—A Cheeta-Hunt fully described—Pulparar—Hindoo Devotees—Burning of Widows—Similar practice among the Ancient Crestonians—Affecting account of the Immolation of a Hindoo Widow—Minute Division of the Hindoo Castes—Ablutions of the Hindoos—Travels of Hindoo Devotees—Death of Calanus—Burning of an Indian Woman in the army of Eumenes

Soon after my return from the hot-wells at Dazagon, I visited Surat, one of the principal cities in India; where the manners and customs of the natives are more oriental than in those places immediately under the English government.

Surat is about a hundred and twenty miles to the northward of Bombay; the voyage thither affords an opportunity of viewing Bassein, Damaun, and some other sea-ports: the hilly coast terminates half-way at the lofty promontory of St. John's; from thence to the entrance of Surat river, the shore is flat and unin-

teresting: the southern mountains are woody, and abound with teak trees, often called the oak of Hindostan, from their great value in ship-building. Teak-timber is more durable than oak, from its oleaginous quality preserving the wood and the iron necessarily used in naval architecture, for a considerable time longer than the British oak, which contains a corrosive quality, tending to consume the iron-work. I saw a ship at Surat which had been built near eighty years; and which, from veneration to its age and long services, was only employed in an annual voyage to the Red Sea, to convey the Mahomedan pilgrims to Judah, on their way to Mecca; and then, returning with them to Surat, after the hodge, or religious ceremonies were finished, the vessel was oiled, and covered up on shore until the following season.

During the fair months, the sea between Surat and Bombay is covered with ships of different nations; large fleets of merchant boats, richly laden, sail every fortnight under convoy of the English cruizers, to protect them against the Coolies, a horde of pirates near the gulph of Cambay, whose swift-sailing vessels constantly infest that navigation.

On anchoring at Surat bar I left the ship which brought me from Bombay, and sailed up the Tappee in her pinnace: this river takes its rise at Maltay, a small town to the northward of Nagpore, the capital of Moodajee Bounselah, in the latitude of 21° 8′ north, and 79° 44′ east longitude; and after an increase by many tributary streams, flows into the sea at Surat bar, a distance of nearly five hundred miles

We followed the serpentine course of the Tappee, or Tapty, through a flat uninteresting country, until

we suddenly opened on the city of Surat, pleasantly situated on the southern bank of the river: the old Indian castle had a venerable aspect: the English, Dutch, French, and Portuguese colours, waved on their respective factories and garden-houses near the river; and from that distance, Surat had a better appearance than on a nearer approach; when we found the walls and towers out of repair, the public buildings in a ruinous state, and the streets dirty, narrow, and irregular.

The bar, or sand-bank, where the ships anchor, and discharge their cargoes, is generally crowded with merchant-vessels from the commercial nations in Europe and Asia. The city exhibits a busy multitude of Hindoos, Mahomedans, Parsees, Jews, Turks, Armenians, Persians, Arabians, Greeks, and other Asiatic strangers, besides the Europeans, whose factories have been already mentioned; it is also frequented by merchants from Malacca, China, Abyssinia, Mosambique, Madagascar, and the Comorro isles, and by numerous traders from the sea-ports, and inland provinces of Hindostan.

In a former chapter I have particularized the trade of Bombay; that of Surat is very similar. Although now one of the greatest emporiums in India, I do not find it mentioned in the oriental commerce of the ancients by Strabo, Arrian, or other writers on that subject, who describe the Arabian and Egyptian trade with Pattala, the modern Tattah, on the Indus; Barygaza, or Baroche, on the Nerbudda; and Musiris, now Murjee, on the Malabar coast. These Arabian vessels imported, from Egypt and other places, woollen-cloth,

brass, iron, lead, tin, glass-ware, coral, wrought-silver, gold and silver bullion, and several kinds of wine: and they exported spices, diamonds, sapphires, pearls, and other gems; with cottons, silks, pepper, and perfumes. Dr. Robertson observes, that "the justness of Arrian's account of the articles imported from India, is confirmed by a Roman law, in which the Indian commodities subject to the payment of duties are enumerated. By comparing these two accounts, we may form an idea, tolerably exact, of the nature and extent of the trade with India in ancient times."

The diamonds, sapphires, and rubies of India, have always been held in the highest estimation; the topazes, amethysts, and some other gems, have perhaps been equalled by those of America: the most celebrated diamond mines are at Golconda, in the territory of the Nizam; and at Raolcondah, near Visiapoor, in the Mahratta empire: Ceylon produces the ruby, sapphire, topaz, and other precious stones; especially one of superior beauty, called the cat's-eye: the pearl fishery of this island is very lucrative, and the pearls vie in size and lustre with those of Ormuz: gold mines are unknown in India; but that valuable metal is found in the torrents which flow from the mountains of Thibet into the Indus and Ganges: there is no silver in Hindostan: several places in the southern peninsula and Ceylon, produce iron, but the natives are very deficient in their method of smelting and manufacturing it.

The first English ship which arrived at Surat was the Hector, commanded by Captain William Hawkins, in August 1608: the Captain brought a letter from

the East India Company, and another from King James the First, to the emperor Jehangire, requesting the intercourse of trade. At this time the Portuguese marine predominated on the Indian seas, in so much that they made prize of all vessels which had not taken their pass; and the fear of their resentment on the ships which traded from Surat to the gulphs of Arabia and Persia, deterred the Mogul's officers from giving the encouragement they might wish, to the English strangers

The Portuguese dreading the future power of the English, and actuated by the most inveterate jealousy, did every thing in their power to prevent the establishment of an English factory at Surat: they often attacked our vessels at sea with a great superiority, but acquired neither riches nor glory· yet by bribery and intrigues with the Surat government, they had for several years sufficient influence to frustrate our trade, and prevent a settlement. At length, in October, 1612, a treaty was concluded by Captain Best with the Mogul government, that an ambassador from the King of England should reside at the imperial court, that, on the arrival of the Company's ships at Swally, the anchoring ground near Surat bar, proclamation should be made, three several days successively, in the city of Surat, that the people of the country might freely come and trade with the English at the water-side; and settled the duties on their commodities at three and a half per cent.

Such was the commencement of our trade with Surat, which is situated in 21° 11′ north latitude, and 72° 50′ east longitude: the outer walls of the city are

seven miles in circumference, with twelve gates: between each gate are irregular towers, mounted with cannon, and the walls are perforated for musquetry: the inner town is surrounded by a similar wall, and an equal number of gates: the streets are narrow, the houses generally lofty, and crowded with inhabitants.

The bazars, filled with costly merchandize; picturesque and interesting groups of natives on elephants, camels, horses, and mules; strangers from all parts of the globe, in their respective costumes; vessels building on the stocks, others navigating the river; together with Turks, Persians, and Armenians, on Arabian chargers; the European ladies in splendid carriages, the Asiatic females in hackeries, drawn by oxen; and the motley appearance of the English and nabob's troops on the fortifications, remind us of the following description of Tyre, by the prophet Ezekiel:

"O thou that art situate at the entry of the sea, which art a merchant of the people for many isles! O Tyrus! thy builders have perfected thy beauty. All the ships of the sea were in thee to occupy thy merchandize. Tarshish was thy merchant, by reason of the multitude of all kinds of riches; with silver, iron, tin, and lead, they traded in thy fairs. Javan and Tubal, they were thy merchants; they traded in the persons of men, and vessels of brass. They of the house of Togarmah traded in thy fairs, with horses, horsemen, and mules. Syria was thy merchant for emeralds, purple, and broidered-work, and fine linen, and coral, and agate; and many isles brought thee horns of ivory, and ebony. Judah and the land of Israel traded in thy markets with wheat of Minnith

and Pannag, and honey, and oil, and balm. Damascus was thy merchant in the multitude of the wares of thy making, for the multitude of all riches, in the wine of Helbon, and white wool. Dan also, and Javan, occupied thy fairs with iron, cassia, and calamus; and Dedan was thy merchant in precious cloths for chariots. Arabia, and all the princes of Kedar, they occupied with thee in lambs, and rams, and goats; and the merchants of Shebnah and Raamah occupied in thy fairs with the chief of all spices, with precious stones and gold. Haran and Canneh were thy merchants for blue cloths, and broidered work, in chests of rich apparel, bound with cords, and made of cedar."—Ezekiel, ch. xxvii. v. 3, 4, 9, 24.

This is a true picture of oriental commerce in ancient times; and a very exact description of the port, and bazars of Surat, at the present day.

The public buildings at Surat are few and mean: the durbar, or nabob's palace, though extensive and convenient, makes but a shabby appearance. The mosques and minarets are small, without taste or elegance. The Hindoo temples are not more conspicuous; and the serais, or caravansaries, much out of repair.

A sort of double government, divided between the nabob and the East India Company, existed in the city. The Dutch, French, and Portuguese nations had no share in the government or police of Surat; but they lived in an elegant style at their town and country houses, with handsome equipages, and suitable attendants. The Dutch factory is the most regular and the best-built mansion in Surat; the Dutch Company import sugar, arrack, and spices, from their set-

tlements, in the eastern islands; and export a considerable quantity of cotton piece-goods manufactured here. The French trade is greatly diminished; and the Portuguese, who once commanded the Indian seas, are every where on the decline: but the commerce of the English Company and private merchants at Surat, is very extensive.

In the English and Dutch burying-grounds, situated without the walls, are some handsome tombs, with domes and pillars in the style of the Mahomedan mausoleums; which, interspersed among shady trees, give these cemeteries a grand and solemn appearance.

The serai, or principal caravansary, at Surat, was much neglected: most of the eastern cities contain one at least, for the reception of strangers; smaller places, called choultries, are erected by charitable persons, or munificent princes, in forests, plains, and deserts, for the accommodation of travellers. Near them is generally a well, and a cistern for the cattle; a Brahmin or Fakeer often resides there to furnish the pilgrim with food, and the few necessaries he may stand in need of.

There are many gardens between the outer and inner walls of Surat, surrounding the villas of the nabob and principal inhabitants; the finest of them is called Mahmud-a-Bhaug, where the nabob had extensive pleasure grounds; with small reservoirs of water, and fountains playing near the open saloons, which produced a refreshing coolness, and had a pleasing effect; the gardens, according to the season, were filled with balsams, poppies, and various flowers, of an equal height, closely planted, and so disposed as to resemble a rich Turkey carpet: this formality seems to be the

acme of Mogul taste. The walks are shaded by cypresses, champacas, and cocoa-nut trees; adorned with oleanders, myrtles, pomegranates, roses, jessamine, and odoriferous plants peculiar to India.

The method of watering these extensive gardens, and of drawing water for the purposes of agriculture, in this part of India, is simple, and more efficacious than the soft showers from a watering-pot, which would by no means satisfy the parched and thirsty soil. The wells at Surat are large, and deep, enclosed with strong masonry; a walk of an easy descent is formed from the surface, ten or twelve feet wide, its length corresponding with the depth of the well. on the surface, opposite to each other, are stone pillars, supporting an horizontal beam, from which is suspended a large leathern bucket, running by a strong rope over a pulley; to the other end of the rope is fastened a yoke of oxen which, as they descend the sloping walk, elevate the bucket containing the water, this is emptied into a reservoir, and from thence conducted by the gardeners in small streams, to every tree and shrub in the garden. Many of the wells and walks are sufficiently large to admit of two or three pair of oxen drawing water at a time; and some of them are erected for the public use by charitable individuals, at the expense of many thousand pounds.

The haram, or women's apartment, at Mahmud-a-Bhaug, is a distinct building, separated from the palace by a large garden: this, from the jealousy of the Moguls, is forbidden ground when the nabob resides there; but being uninhabited, I had an opportunity of seeing it: all the windows look into enclosed gardens, and have no prospect of any thing beyond

them. It seems calculated to furnish every pleasure that can be expected by the unfortunate females immured under the Argus-eyes of duennas and eunuchs. Baths, fountains, fruits and flowers, the European fair ones would think a poor compensation for liberty; the Asiatic ladies, accustomed to this confinement, are not discontented with their lot.

An intelligent oriental traveller, describing a scene in the Nizam's country similar to Mahmud-a-Bhaug, justly observes that, "although these gardens cannot be compared to those of Europe in taste and variety, they are peculiarly adapted to the retired pleasures of a Mahomedan life: the principal requisites of which are coolness, space, and secrecy; besides that, they hold it both grateful and healthy to live much among the fragrance of plants and flowers; and that pride, jealousy, and modesty, unite in demanding perfect security from all intrusion. Hence the high walls, so inelegant in the eyes of a European, are the necessary guardians of a Mahomedan's honour, and the safeguard of his pleasures. Within this protection, secluded from the world, the voluptuous Mussulman, laying aside the grandeurs of the day, with the irritation of mind which accompanies ambition, abandons himself to soft repose; and, in the stillness of a starry night, acquires that serenity of mind which lulls the soul into pleasing complacency; forming a delightful contrast to the stormy passions of an agitated day. Negligently stretched upon his couch, he listens to the melodious song, and contemplates the graceful forms of the surrounding dancers, amid the odoriferous smoke of incense."

These oriental gardens bear a great resemblance to

those of the Phæacian monarch, both in situation and general effect.

" Close to the gates a spacious garden lies,
From storms defended, and inclement skies,
Tall thriving trees confess'd the fruitful mould,
The swelling mango ripens here to gold,
Here the blue fig with luscious juice o'erflows,
With deeper red the full pomegranate glows,
The branch here bends beneath the weighty pear,
The verdant olives flourish round the year,
The balmy spirit of the western gale
Eternal breathes on fruits untaught to fail
The same mild season gives the blooms to blow,
The buds to harden, and the fruits to grow
A plenteous fountain the whole prospect crown'd,
Which through the garden leads its stream around,
Visits each plant, and waters all the ground "

Homer's Odyssey

The palace and gardens of Mahmud-a-Bhaug were out of repair; as the Moguls of rank are seldom at any trouble or expense, on a place which was not built by themselves; they had rather be the reputed founder of an insignificant villa, than preserve the grandest palace erected by their ancestors. These gardens were made by a former nabob, and called after his name; they cost an immense sum, and required many years to complete them; yet his successor never resided there, nor prevented their decay: while, with the iron rod of despotism, he was converting a populous part of the city into a large garden, adorned with extensive walks, groves, and fountains, to surround a summer pavilion: the reigning nabob dignified this favourite retreat with the appellation of " The Gift of God," the suffering manufacturers,

driven from their quiet habitations, and shady verdant looms, called it " The Garden of Oppression."

The baths at Mahmud-a Bhaug had been on a grand scale: in most of the principal houses at Surat are private hummums, or bagnios; which consist of one or two small rooms, paved with marble, illuminated by a sky-light of coloured glass, and furnished with cisterns of hot and cold water. There are many public hummums on a larger scale, but on the same construction: where oils, perfumes, and pastes, are provided for anointing the visiters. You first enter a vestibule, paved and lined with marble, surrounded by benches for the convenience of undressing: from thence you are conducted by two men into the marble bathing room; which contains two cisterns of hot and cold water, these are mingled in copper vessels, until of the required temperature, and then poured upon the visitor by the attendants. The operation of these men is at first disagreeable to Europeans, especially in the champooing, which is a method of working or kneading the flesh, and cracking the joints, after being rubbed over with perfumed pastes. Champooing affords delightful sensations to the Asiatics, and many Europeans, after being accustomed to this singular treatment, consider it a luxury.

The Banian hospital at Surat is a most remarkable institution; it consists of a large plot of ground enclosed with high walls; divided into several courts, or wards, for the accommodation of animals: in sickness they are watched with the tenderest care, and find a peaceful asylum for the infirmities of age. When an animal breaks a limb, or is otherwise disabled from serving his master, he carries him to the hospital, and,

indifferent to what nation or caste the owner may belong, the patient is never refused admittance. If he recovers, he cannot be reclaimed, but must remain in the hospital for life, subject to the duty of drawing water for those pensioners debilitated by age or disease from procuring it for themselves. At my visit, the hospital contained horses, mules, oxen, sheep, goats, monkeys, poultry, pigeons, and a variety of birds; with an aged tortoise, who was known to have been there for seventy-five years. The most extraordinary ward was that appropriated to rats, mice, bugs, and other noxious vermin: the overseers of the hospital frequently hire beggars from the streets for a stipulated sum, to pass a night among the fleas, lice, and bugs, on the express condition of suffering them to enjoy their feast without molestation.

The Banian hospital in Surat has several dependent endowments without the walls, for such invalids and convalescents to whom pasturage and country air may be recommended; and especially for the maintenance of the goats purchased from slaughter on the anniversary of the Mahomedan festival, when so many of those animals are devoted to destruction.

The doctrine of the metempsychosis is commonly supposed to be the cause of founding this singular hospital; I, however, conversed with several Brahmins on the subject, who rather ascribed it to a motive of benevolence for the animal creation: nor can we do otherwise than approve of that part of the institution appropriated for the comfort of those valuable creatures who have exhausted their strength in the service of man.

The inhabitants of Surat are generally merchants or

manufacturers: after the Mahrattas conquered Guzerat, the weavers of keemcabs, and other rich stuffs, the embroiderers, jewellers, painters, and inlayers of ivory, ebony, and sandal-wood, meeting with no encouragement from the Mahratta government, emigrated from Ahmedabad to Surat, and other flourishing cities in the western districts of Hindostan, where they have resumed their employments with great success.

Surat is also a considerable market for shawls, one of the most delicate fabrics yet brought from the loom: they are not indeed manufactured at Surat, nor in any of the southern provinces, being chiefly the produce of Cachemire, that "paradise of nations," where Acber, and many of the imperial princes, retired from the cares of government: encircled by their favourite courtiers, and in the bosom of their family, they enjoyed in that mild climate the picturesque scenery of the surrounding mountains, and the rural beauties of the delicious valley, watered by the celebrated Hydaspes, and refreshed by many other streams from its lofty boundaries. The shawls manufactured in Cachemire, from the delicate silky wool of a goat peculiar to Thibet, are an elegant article of luxury, too well known in Europe to need a particular description: this manufacture is not confined to Cachemire, but all others are deemed of an inferior quality: their prime cost is from twenty to five hundred rupees a shawl, according to the size, texture, and pattern: some, perhaps, may be more valuable.

The staples of Europe are disposed of by agents at the respective factories in Surat; but the commodities exported to Europe from India and China far exceed

in value those imported from thence: the natives of India, from the mildness of the climate, and fertility of the soil, want but few foreign supplies: gold and silver have been always carried thither by European traders. The English commerce in Asia, and especially in China, towards the conclusion of the eighteenth century, never could have been conducted on such an extensive scale, had it not been for the inexhaustible mines of South America: their precious metals have, by various channels, been conveyed to the east, from whence they never return: it is singular, that the discovery of the new world by Columbus, from whence proceeds this influx of gold and silver to Europe, was nearly at the same period when Vasco de Gama opened the trade to India by the Cape of Good Hope.

Having accompanied the English chief on a public visit to the nabob of Surat, I will endeavour to describe the court etiquette at an oriental durbar. The chief went in state, attended by the members of council, aides-de-camp, and other officers, preceded by a detachment of European infantry, the British colours, and other insignia appropriate to his station. The castle guns fired a royal salute: and on approaching the Durbar, the nabob's troops were ready to receive us. The naib, or vizier, with the nabob's brother, met the chief in the inner court, and conducted him to the hall of audience, where he was seated on the nabob's right-hand; the other gentlemen, in chairs, according to their respective stations. On his left were the naib, the nabob's sons, brother, and officers of state. After a complimentary discourse, and a few political questions, we were served with coffee, in small porcelain cups, placed in silver saucers, and soon after with

glasses of perfumed sherbet: the nabob then presented the chief with an Arabian horse, a diamond ring, and several pieces of gold and silver keemcab: his attendants brought to each of the gentlemen a present of shawls, keemcab, or muslin, suited to their rank; the ceremony concluded by presenting pawn, or betel-nut, folded up in a leaf of betel, with chunam, and spices, fastened by a clove: this is the usual indication of the visit being terminated. The nabob attended his guests to the bottom of the steps leading from the durbar to the area, and at parting took each by the hand; his eldest son and brother accompanied us to the outward gate, and took leave in the same manner.

The termination of the monthly fast of Ramadān, one of the strictest ordinances in the Mahomedan religion, afforded me an opportunity of seeing the nabob go in state to the jumai musjod, or principal mosque: a ceremony he always performs on the appearance of the new moon after the Ramadan; in which month the Mussulmans believe the Koran was sent from heaven, and observe the fast with great austerity

The procession left the durbar at nine o'clock in the morning, led by the cajee, a venerable Mahomedan priest, followed by a train of artillery, with two flags on each gun-carriage: an officer bearing the sacred standard of green silk, embroidered with gold, and mounted on an elephant, surrounded by young men with small banners, formed the first division. Then came a detachment of Mogul infantry, with a band of martial music, preceding the scidees, or Mahomedan caffrees, favourite slaves and chief officers of the nabob, mounted on excellent horses, richly caparisoned: the scidees are generally natives of Abyssinia, adopted into

the family of the rich Moguls, and often married to their daughters. After them came a company of English troops, followed by an elephant, and camels carrying kettle-drums and musicians, with others on horseback: these were succeeded by an English gentleman of the council at Surat, in a state palankeen, representing the East India Company, as governor of the castle, and admiral of the Mogul's fleet: the nabob's empty palankeen and carriages went before his two sons, mounted on Arabian chargers, immediately preceding the elephant on which his highness was enthroned in a splendid houdah, with his principal attendant in a separate apartment behind; the nabob was richly dressed, and his turban adorned with jewels: the covering of the houdah and caparison of the elephant, were scarlet and gold. The buxey, or general of the army, at the head of a select body, closed the procession.

This magnificent cavalcade only occurring once a year, was very gratifying to a stranger; but I was still more delighted with the company I accidentally met on the occasion. A friend procured me a projecting window in one of the principal streets to view the spectacle; where I was soon accosted by an old duenna, to desire I would either turn my back, or walk down stairs, while some Mogul ladies passed through the room in their way to an adjoining latticed chamber: knowing the necessity of obedience, I preferred looking out of the window, and kept my station: but at the sound of footsteps I was tempted to peep behind me; when I only beheld the careful matron holding up a thick veil, to screen her charge: a similar curiosity to see an English stranger brought them to the lattice; fortunately, one of the party had known

me before, which induced her to break through an established custom, and pay me a visit, accompanied by one of the greatest beauties I ever beheld: her age did not exceed fifteen; her form was perfect, her features regular, and her large antelope eyes of brilliant lustre: although fairer than the generality of Indian females, neither the rose nor the lily adorned her complexion, yet the brunette tint rather enriched than impaired the softness and delicacy of her skin; "grace was in all her steps," and her whole deportment elegant and courteous.

This young beauty excelled in personal charms, but was not so superbly attired as her friend, whom I hastily sketched, as a specimen of a well-dressed Mogul. Her drawers, of green satin flowered with gold, were seen under a chemise of transparent gauze, reaching to her slippers, richly embroidered: a vest of pale blue satin, edged with gold, sat close to her shape, which an upper robe of striped silver muslin, full and flowing, displayed to great advantage: a netted veil of crimson silk, flowered with silver, fell carelessly over her long braided hair, combed smooth, and divided from the forehead, where a cluster of jewels was fastened by strings of seed-pearl: her ear-rings were large and handsome, that in her nose, according to our idea of ornament, less becoming: the Asiatic ladies are extremely fond of the nose-jewel, and it is mentioned among the Jewish trinkets in the old testament; a necklace in intermingled rows of pearls and gold covered her bosom, and several strings of large pearls were suspended from an embroidered girdle set with diamonds: bracelets of gold and coral reached from her wrist to the elbow, golden chains encircled

her ancles, and all her toes and fingers were adorned with valuable rings. Like most of the oriental females, of all religions, her eyes were tinged by a black circle, formed with the powder of antimony; which produces a refreshing coolness, gives the eye additional lustre, and is thought to be a general improvement to Asiatic beauty.

The slippers, girdle, and other parts of the Mogul dress, of both sexes, are embroidered with gold, silver, and coloured silks, upon velvet, satin, or scarlet cloth: the jama is often richly embroidered, this is the name of the muslin robe, worn by Hindoos and Mahomedans, which falls in full folds from the waist to the feet; the upper part is made to fit the body, and crossing over the bosom, is tied on the left side by the Hindoos, and by the Mahomedans on the right. The veil is an elegant part of the female dress, and has been so esteemed, from the time of Rebekah to the present day: Homer frequently mentions it as an ornament of Grecian and Trojan beauty:

> "A veil translucent, o'er her brows display'd,
> Her beauty seems, and only seems, to shade."

We were acquainted with a young Persian, a temporary resident at Baroche, who one day brought his wife to our garden-house on a visit to my sister, which seemed productive of much novelty and pleasure to both parties: on taking leave they mutually exchanged presents; the Persian lady presented my sister with a veil of purple silk-net, embroidered with silver, such as the Moguls wear either to cover the face, or to throw back as an ornament.

The art of embroidery is of great antiquity, as we

learn from sacred and profane history: the dress of the princes and nobles in Homer's time resembled the jama, girdle, and kincob drawers flowered with gold and silver, now worn by the Moguls.

Such is the analogy between ancient and modern usages in the oriental world; where things are much less liable to change than in Europe, especially among the females, whose manners and customs keep them in a secluded state: yet the higher classes enjoy various pleasures in the haram; and many of them confirm Lady Wortley Montague's account of the ladies in Turkey, "where no woman, of what rank soever, is permitted to go into the streets without two *murlins*, one that covers her face, all but her eyes; and another, that hides the whole dress of her head, and hangs half way down her back: their shapes are also wholly concealed by a thing called a *feugee*, which so effectually disguises them, that there is no distinguishing the lady from her slave: it is impossible for the most jealous husband to know his wife when he meets her; and no man dare touch or follow a woman in the street. The great ladies seldom let their gallants know who they are, and it is so difficult to find out, that they can very seldom guess at *her* name, whom they have corresponded with for half a year together."

Nor must we suppose, because neither the Hindoo nor Mahomedan women are allowed to eat with the men, either at public festivals or family meals, that they are abstemious in the haram; on the contrary they have very expensive entertainments in their own apartments: thus it was among the Greeks and Persians; when Ahasuerus king of Persia made a royal banquet for his nobles, Vashti the queen gave a feast

to the women in the royal house. Maillet, the French consul at Cairo, was invited to a magnificent entertainment given by the Basha on the circumcision of his son, at which all the great men in that part of Egypt were present; at the same time the expense in the ladies' apartments amounted to nearly as much as the public festival; "there being the same liberalities, the same pleasures, the same abundance, that appeared out of the haram."

The despotism and avarice of the Indian sovereigns generally prevent their subjects from making that display of fortune, which wealth and situation authorize in other countries, consequently, within decayed palaces, ruinous courts, and closed gates, in modern oriental cities, it is not uncommon to find a house and garden fitted up in good style: this contrast was frequent among the Nabob's subjects in Surat; those who had claimed the English protection better enjoyed the gifts of fortune.

During my visit at that city, a young gentleman conversant in the Persian language, had an opportunity of rendering an essential service to a Mogul widow of distinction; who, in consequence of some deeds falsely translated, and misrepresented by the Mahomedan lawyers, was involved in a long series of trouble and expense: from the humane impulse of rescuing a respectable family from such chicanery, he interested himself in the cause, revealed the truth, and reinstated the lady in her fortune. Not having seen her generous benefactor during the whole transaction, and desirous of acknowledging the obligation, she requested an interview.

The young Englishman was conducted to a ruined

edifice in a solitary part of the outer city, which appeared to have been an appendage to some magnificent mansion: passing through the portal and dark narrow passages common in eastern houses, he entered a spacious court, adorned with fountains, shaded by tamarind trees, and double tuberoses, the pride of Surat gardens; this led to an open pavilion surrounded by a veranda, and overlooking a further garden in a similar taste, terminated by a hall elegantly furnished with mirrors, carpets, and Persian paintings, above were the family apartments. Here my friend was served with sherbet, fruit, flowers, and a hooka. The attendants withdrew on the approach of their lady, richly dressed and closely veiled; she entered with a graceful dignity, from the overflowing of a grateful heart commenced an interesting conversation, and presenting him with ottah of roses, and a valuable jewel, seemed hurt at his refusal. Young and thoughtless, he made a transition from the brilliant gem, to her antelope eyes, sparkling through the veil; and, from a momentary impulse, requested he might behold a countenance irradiated by her superior mind: unwilling to deny the only favour he seemed inclined to accept, she withdrew her veil, and displayed a face still decked with youthful bloom, delicate features, and fine expression: in this singular situation the enamoured Englishman began a subject not easy to mistake, in the warm strains of the Persian and Arabian poets; to which she at first vouchsafed a smile: but assuming a dignified air, and impressive language, she assured him that the deep sense of her obligation had alone induced her to deviate from established custom, in requesting this interview; but a sense of her

own honour, veneration to her husband's memory, and maternal example to her children, would ever regulate her conduct; that he might not, however, think her ungrateful, she appointed another meeting the next evening.

Encouraged by so flattering an invitation, the amorous youth repaired to the pavilion, found every thing in the same style of elegance and hospitality, and in the further saloon was received by a lady, whom he accosted as the mistress of the house; until, throwing off her veil, he discovered a beautiful Mogul, young, witty, and elegant, who entertained him at the pavilion, while the widow and her children were visiting at a distant villa. He never afterwards discovered his lovely incognita, nor could he, consistent with propriety, continue his visits in a Mogul family.

We must not too hastily condemn this grateful Mahomedan, nor judge her conduct by the decorum of female manners in England, or the purity of the Christian religion: her education had been different, and the oriental standard of propriety is more relaxed than our own, on the present occasion gratitude predominated over every other consideration.

In the vicinity of so populous and opulent a city as Surat, the country is highly cultivated, and a fertile soil amply repays the farmer; the fields, generally enclosed, and the hedges planted with mango and tamarind trees, produce wheat, rice, juaree, bahjeree, and other Indian grains, luxuriantly diversified by crops of cotton, hemp, tobacco, plants for dying, and a variety of seeds for expressing lamp oil; particularly the erindah, or palma-christi, which is also much esteemed for medicinal virtues. The wheat-fields afforded me

great delight; they were the first I had seen since my departure from England, and the harvest had begun: the corn is trodden out by oxen, walking over the ears, as described by Homer,

> " Where round and round, with never-varied pain,
> The trampling steers beat out th' unnumber'd grain "

The gardens produce cabbages, cauliflowers, pease, french-beans, artichokes, asparagus, potatoes, carrots, turnips, lettuce, and salads, in abundance and perfection; besides a variety of indigenous roots and vegetables. Among other useful productions is a vegetable soap, called omlah; the nuts grow in clusters on a wild tree, and the kernels, when made into a paste, are preferred to common soap for washing shawls, silk, and embroidery; it lathers in salt water, and on that account is valuable at sea, where common soap is of little use; retah, another vegetable soap, in the vicinity of Surat, has the same property.

The wood-apple, a fruit unknown at Bombay, grows on a large tree, in perpetual verdure; and, like many in the torrid zone, is covered at the same time with blossoms and ripe fruit; the apple is circular, heavy, and the size of an orange, hanging perpendicularly at the extremity of long slender branches, bending with their weight; which gives the tree a beautiful appearance: the fruit smells like a mellow apple, but on breaking the wooden shell, we find an acid pulp, full of seeds, eaten only by the poorer natives. Under the shades of these trees, and of the banian and tamarind groves, the weavers every morning fix their looms, and remove them in the evening: they are constructed with the greatest simplicity; it is astonishing how

few materials are required to fabricate the most delicate muslins.

The lanes near Surat afford delightful rides; the eye wanders over extensive scenes of cultivation, villages, farms, and lakes, embellished by the nymphea in every pleasing variety: the lakes abound with water-fowl; the fields are enlivened by partridges, quails, and green pigeons; and the mango groves filled with monkeys, squirrels, and peacocks. Parrots, larks, doves, amadavads, toohties, and bulbuls, enliven the walks; but gay plumage generally supersedes melody in the Asiatic birds; the amadavads are very small, beautifully arrayed in scarlet, yellow, brown, and white; I have seen a hundred together in a cage, but never two of them marked alike, and one only sings at a time, in a low simple note. The toohtee, a pretty bird, is so called from a monotonous repetition of its own name, like the cuckoo in England.

The surrounding plains abound with deer, antelopes, hares, and feathered game: the eastern hills, wild and woody, are infested by tigers, leopards, hyenas, wolves, and other ferocious animals, whom hunger impels to commit depredations in cultivated tracts near the city. The principal Moguls at Surat keep them in menageries; particularly the leopard cheeta, and syah gush, which afford them much diversion in hunting antelopes.

The tiger, leopard, and hyena are well known in Europe, and therefore need no minute description; the largest hyena I ever saw was in the nabob's menagerie; his head resembled that of a wolf, but more fierce and ugly: the body partook of the wolf and hog, covered by long bristly hair, of a dusky gray

colour, confusedly striped with black.* The hyena is said to be the most savage and ferocious of quadrupeds; when enraged its aspect is hideous. Jackalls abound in the country round Surat, and hunt in large packs. The panther, leopard, and cheeta, are of the same genus as the royal tiger, but smaller; and differ in having the skin spotted instead of striped: these spots vary in each species, in the panther and leopard several small black spots encircle a mark of bright orange colour, on a field of paler hue; the cheeta, felis jubata, is distinguished by black spots only, on a yellowish brown.

In my original letter from Surat, in the year 1772, I had written an account of the cheeta-hunt; but the friend to whom I am indebted for many interesting occurrences in this publication, favoured me with the following extract from his journal at Cambay, which, from a keen sportsman, is more accurate and entertaining than any thing I can offer.

"The diversion of hunting with the cheeta is much admired and pursued by the princes and chieftains of Hindostan, both Mahomedans and Hindoos, excepting Brahmins. The cheeta, though of the leopard species, differs from it materially, although confounded with that animal by Buffon, and other naturalists. In height the cheeta considerably exceeds the leopard, and greatly excels it in form and beauty. Its head is smaller in proportion, its eyes are brown or hazel, without an appearance of vice; its spots are black and solid, not in circles; its body is long, loins slender, chest deep, legs straight and taper, and its paws not larger than those of a common-sized dog; its tail is long and gracefully turned. The cheeta is as much

superior to the leopard in the docility and generosity of its nature, as in the elegance of its shape.

"The cheeta is a native of many parts of Hindostan, but those of Guzerat are most esteemed, two of them were caught for and sent to me as a present, by a chief of that province. They were brought to me soon after they were caught, which was effected by digging deep pits, and covering them over with boughs, near the places they frequented, which are easily discovered by certain trees, against which they are very fond of rubbing themselves. If they are caught young, and brought up by hand, they prove good for nothing, and lose that degree of activity and fierceness, which characterize those procured after having provided prey for themselves in a wild state.

"One of those cheetas was broke in after he came to me, and was in the space of twelve months as familiar as a dog, and would follow his keeper loose through the streets of Cambay; though, from the apprehension of his killing goats and other tame animals, he was generally led by a chain: his common allowance of food is five seir, or something more than four pounds of solid mutton every day, except that preceding the day on which he hunts, when he is kept from food.

"I shall now describe the method of hunting with this animal: a reynkla, or Indian carriage, called by the English a hackery, as introduced into the drawing, is attached to the cheeta; on this cart, which is drawn by oxen, he leaps from custom without hesitation: he is then hooded, and his keeper, sitting by him, secures him by a string through his collar on the neck;

in this manner he is conveyed to the scene of action, having a belt round his loins, the use of which will be hereafter explained.

"Antelopes are very common in the northern parts of Guezerat, and there is seldom any doubt of sport: when the game is descried, the sportsmen generally leave their horses and attendants, and get on hackeries, or country carts, like that of the cheeta, as being less likely to alarm the antelopes; all the followers on foot likewise keep close behind the hackeries; for, exclusive of the circumstance of frightening the game, the cheeta himself is apt to be alarmed, when carried out to a hunt, by a crowd, which he might disregard in the town; and so strongly has instinct implanted in him the fear of man, and the consciousness of his being obnoxious to him, that should a person appear at a distance in a line with the game, he will scarce ever run; but it should be remarked, that the introduction of the horses and attendants is only a favour allowable after the game is killed.

"Every sportsman being thus mounted on his vehicle, they proceed in pursuit of the antelopes, and the subsequent manœuvres depend upon the nature of the country; if it is woody, the cheeta may be unhooded at any distance; for the astonishing sagacity of the animal curbing his impulse to run, on first getting sight, he leaps carefully off the cart, and creeps on with the greatest cunning from bush to bush, narrowly observing the game, and most artfully avoiding discovery. If by these means he can get within the distance of about seventy yards, he rushes forth at full speed, and seldom misses. This method is by far the most enter-

taining, as it discovers the animal in every point of view, and shows the extent and turn of his force and genius.

"If the cheeta finds that he cannot proceed undiscovered, or if he perceives the game to be alarmed, he crouches, and lies close to the ground; thus posted the hackeries take a circuit, leaving the cheeta, and getting on the other side of the antelopes; and then, edging down, urge them towards the ambuscade, which if they pass within the distance of seventy or eighty yards, there is every reason to expect success.

"A third method is in a bare and open country, where we are frequently obliged to follow the game sometime before we can get within distance; in which case the huntsman studiously avoids getting to windward; and endeavours by traversing to force the antelopes to run across him, at which time the cheeta is most likely to follow them; for, although he may be previously within distance, he generally hesitates, even when unhooded, to quit his cart, if the game is standing still, or looking towards him when he has no cover to conceal himself, But sometimes, with every advantage of distance, the cheeta will not run, and in this respect, so trying to an eager sportsman, he is very inferior to the dog, who never fails to do his utmost. When the cheeta resolves to exert himself, his velocity is astonishing, for although the antelope is esteemed the swiftest species of the deer, and the course generally begins at the distance of seventy or eighty yards, yet the game is usually caught, or else makes his escape, within the space of three or four hundred yards, the cheeta seldom running a greater distance, and in that I have measured repeated strokes of seven

paces. On coming up with the game, especially if a doe or a fawn, it is difficult to describe the celerity with which it overthrows its prey. But the attack of an old buck is a more arduous task; his great strength sometimes enables him to make a hard struggle, though seldom with success; for, although I have known a buck to get loose two or three times, yet I never saw one escape after having been fairly seized.

"The cheeta, on overtaking the deer, by a most powerful and dextrous use of its paw, overthrows it, and in the same instant seizes it by the throat, when, if it is young, or a doe, as already observed, it does not quit its hold until he finds the respiration cease; but if it is a buck, whose neck is very thick and powerful, he is obliged to be more cautious, and to avoid in the struggle not only a blow from the horns, which from the mere convulsive motion of terror and agony, might be very dangerous; but from the hoofs, whose sharpness renders them equally so: the artful care with which he avoids these weapons is truly astonishing: the deer thus seized by the throat, loses all capacity of struggling, and in the interim the cheeta-keeper comes up, and instantly cuts the throat of the antelope, it being an abomination among the Mahomedans, as with the Jews, to eat an animal killed in any way but with the knife. The cheeta finding the animal dead, would commence the work of laceration, which he generally begins between the hinder legs, but is prevented by his keeper, who either catches the blood from his throat in a ladle kept for that purpose, and presents it to him to lap, or nimbly cuts off the last joint of the leg, and putting it into his mouth, he leaves him employed with it, and quickly carries off

the game, to secure it behind the hackery. The cheeta having amused himself with his ladle or bone, his keeper leads him to the cart, which he ascends without taking any further notice of the game, though tied close under his nose.

"This is the mode generally practised when we intend to pursue our sport; and I have killed four antelopes in one morning: but when it is the intention to proceed no further, the cheeta has a handsome share of the deer last killed. It sometimes happens that the cheeta is thrown out, and misses his prey; he then lies down, and the keeper drives the hackery to him: disappointment sometimes sours his temper, and he shews signs of anger, but I never saw them attended with any danger. The keeper, after soothing him a little, takes him by the collars round his neck and waist, and conducts him to the cart, on which he readily leaps. I have heard of accidents happening on these occasions, but I never saw one, or a likelihood of one, though I always made a point of being near the animal, both after seizing and missing.

"One of my cheetas having frequently disappointed me by refusing to run, I resolved to keep him without food until he killed for himself; but although I had him out every day in sight of game, he forced me to keep my resolution until the eighth day; when he ran with surprizing velocity, and killed a black buck; though he had not ate any thing during the whole time."

The Moguls train another beast for antelope-hunting, called the syah-gush, or black-ears; which appears to be the same as the caracal, or Persian lynx, felis caracal. The syah-gush resembles the lynx, but

is smaller, and less fierce; with a more pointed head, and remarkably long ears, tufted with black, its general colour is a reddish brown; in the chace it affords much amusement, and is employed in the pursuit of herons, cullums, cranes, and large birds.

Porcupines are met with in most parts of Hindostan; they are generally about two feet long, and one in height, in appearance resembling the hedgehog; except that the prickles of the latter are on the porcupine hard pointed quills, which cover the whole body in different lengths, from one to fifteen inches; the porcupines are very destructive in gardens; they select the nicest fruit within their reach, and will pass over beds of common vegetables, to devour the lettuce, cucumber, French-beans, and other delicacies: when roasted, their flesh has the appearance and flavour of pork: I have frequently dined on this animal, as also on the small land-tortoise: both very common in Guzerat.

My walks from Surat were often directed to the village of Pulparra, pleasantly situated on the banks of the Tappee, and famous for its seminaries of Brahmins: the drooping branches of the banian trees, planted on the steep banks, overshadow the steps leading to the sacred stream, for the convenience of ablutions, and spread a solemn gloom around the Hindoo temples and altars, which abound in this spot. Pulparra is esteemed peculiarly holy; it is the general resort of recluse Brahmins, and gymnosophists of various descriptions: there also, at stated seasons, the other tribes of Hindoos repair to bathe, and offer their flowery sacrifices: the sacred edifices and groves are strewed with the champa, mogree, and nymphea; and

the cottages and arbours of the Yogees and Senasses are crowded with visitors to behold the austerities of these devotees, who, forgetting they were created, for active and useful life, endued with a capacity to improve their talents, and enjoy rational pleasures, consume their days in stupid indolence: or inflict on themselves severe penance and cruel torture, in hopes of rendering themselves acceptable to their deities, in a state of ignorance or forgetfulness of that Being whose tender mercies are over all his works

The bodies of the deceased Hindoos are burnt at Pulparra, and their ashes scattered over this sacred part of the river: here also their widows frequently immolate themselves on the funeral pile of their husbands. Herodotus mentions a similar practice among the Crestonians: where "each person had several wives, and on the decease of the husband, a great contest ensued to determine which of them had been best beloved: she, to whom that honour was ascribed, was gaudily dressed, and then sacrificed, by her nearest relation, on the tomb of her husband, with whom she was afterwards buried: not to be elected was deemed an affliction by the surviving wives, and was imputed to them as a disgrace" This idea certainly prevails among the Hindoos, the memory of the wife who burns herself is venerated, the widow who survives her husband is condemned to a sort of domestic slavery. No immolation of a Hindoo widow took place during my residence at Surat; nor was I ever an eye-witness of this extraordinary sacrifice I have heard many relations, and read several authentic manuscripts of the interesting scene, but none more satisfactory than the following letter from one of

my medical friends, who saw a young Brahmin go through the dreadful ordeal, and thus feelingly describes it:

"I was hastily summoned by a Brahmin friend yesterday, about five in the evening, to be a spectator of this dreadful ceremony. Soon after my conductor and myself had quitted the house, we were informed that the *suttee* (the name given to these female victims), had passed by; and we soon traced her route by the *gulol*, or rose-coloured powder, she had thrown around her, and the betel-leaf, which, as is usual on these occasions, she had scattered.

"She had reached that part of the river set apart for religious ablutions, before we arrived, and, having performed her last ceremony of this kind, was sitting on the margin of the stream: over her was held an aftabgheer, or state umbrella; an attendant fanned her with a waving veil, and she was surrounded by her relations, friends, and select Brahmins, the populace being kept aloof by a guard from the government. In this situation she distributed two thousand rupees among the Brahmins, and the jewels with which she was decorated to her friends, reserving only the nose-ring, called bulawk, and the bracelets on her wrists.

"My position prevented my seeing more of her than her hands, the palms of which being joined, they were uplifted in an attitude of invocation: quitting therefore this place, I removed to an eminence, which gave me an opportunity of observing the construction of the funeral pile, and commanding the path-way by which I understood she would approach it: the spot chosen for its erection was about forty

yards from the river, directly in front of her as she sat: when I came up, the frame alone was raised; it consisted of four uprights, each about ten feet high Its length was about nine, and the breadth of it under six; from near the top of the uprights was suspended, by ropes, a roof of slender rafters laid lengthwise, parallel with each other; on this were soon placed as many billets as it seemed capable of bearing, while beneath, a pile was raised of more substantial timbers to the height of four feet, this again was covered over with bundles of the straw called curwee, and bushes of dry tulsee, one of the sacred plants of the Hindoos; the sides and one end being then closed up with the same materials, the other end was left open, and formed an entrance.

"The dismal tenement being thus completed, soon after the widow rose and came forward, walking amidst her friends without support: she approached the door, and there having paid some further devotions for the occasion, retired a few paces, and sat encircled as before.

"The dead body was now brought from the waterside, where it had hitherto lain, and deposited within the hollow of the pile; several sweet-meats were put in after it, and a large paper bag, containing either flower or the dust of sandal-wood. The widow rising, walked three times slowly round the pile; when, seating herself on a small square stone, placed opposite the entrance, she accepted and returned the endearments of her friends with great serenity: this done, she again stood up, and having stroked her right hand in an affectionate manner over the heads of her dearest relations and intimate friends, with a gentle

inclination of her person towards them, she let her arm fall round their necks in a faint embrace, and turned from them. Now, with her hands indeed raised to heaven, but her eyes cast, in a glare of abstraction, deep into that cave of anguish which waited her, she stood awhile a piteous statue!—good God, have mercy on her! At length, without altering a feature, or the least agitation of her frame, she ascended the threshold unassisted, and entering the cave, lay down on the right side of her husband's corpse; yielding her tender body, in the full meridian of its youth and beauty, a victim to a barbarous and cruelly consecrated error of deluded faith!

"As soon as the victim entered, she was shut from our view by several bundles of straw, with which the aperture was closed, and all the actors in this tragic scene seemed to vie with each other who should be most forward in hurrying it to a conclusion. In the same instant the air was darkened by a cloud of *gulol;* the cords being cut which sustained the roof, it immediately fell to crush the limbs of the yet living sacrifice, the dreadful flame was communicated to the pile in a variety of parts; and the loud clamour of the trumpets assailed the ear from every quarter! when the conflagration became general, and not till then, the pyre was fed for a time with a large quantity of *ghee*, or clarified butter, thrown by the nearest of kin; but no combustible whatever was used in preparing the wood, of which the pile was composed.

"It is said to be a custom, that as the victim ascends the pile, she is furnished with a lighted taper: I heard some Brahmins assert that it was the case in this instance; but I traced the whole progress of the cere-

monial with so close and eager an attention, that I think I may safely contradict them. Before I left the place, a guard was posted over the pyre, to remain until the fire went out, that no accident might befal the bones of the sacrifice, some of which are always collected by the relations, and sent to Benares, where they are either preserved as sacred relics, or made an offering to the holy stream of *Gunga*.

"The subject of this shocking, though by no means uncommon immolation, was Toolsebhai, the wife of Ragobah Tantea, a young man of thirty years of age, nephew to Junabhy Daddah, a person of distinction, and Amul of Poonah Toolsebhai was about twenty years of age, her stature above the middle standard, her form elegant, her features interesting and expressive, and her eyes particularly large, full, and commanding: at the solemn moment in which I saw her, these beauties were eminently conspicuous, notwithstanding her skin was then discoloured with turmeric, her hair dishevelled, and wildly ornamented with flowers, and her looks like those of one whose senses wandered; or, to come nearer the impression, whose soul was already fleeting, and in a state of half-separation from the body.

"A beautiful little girl, not more than four years old, the fruit of their union, survives her parents, thus early removed into another state of existence."

Such is the simple account of this ceremony by a man of feeling; many relations are published, more highly coloured. The most extraordinary and affecting spectacle of this kind is related by Bernier, a celebrated French traveller in the seventeenth century, who resided many years, as physician, at the court of

Aurungzebe. During a journey from Ahmedabad to Aga, he witnessed a shocking tragedy which roused all the feelings of his benevolent heart, nor has he suppressed a manly indignation in the recital. A young Hindoo widow, attended by five females, surrounded by Brahmins, was advancing towards the funeral pile of her husband: when the usual ceremonies were over, he beheld the young and beautiful victim kindle the combustible altar on which she had placed herself near her husband's corpse: the flames were increased by the oil of sandal, poured in by the ministering priests: and when the pyre burnt furiously, the five infatuated attendants rushed into the midst of the fire, and shared the fate of their mistress. The amiable Bernier, indignant at this horrid spectacle, passionately exclaims against a religion which could permit such a sacrifice, and still more so against "*les demons de Brahmens*," who not only encouraged these deluded females, but were the most active persons throughout the infernal tragedy.

Religious prejudices are very powerful, but how they can thus destroy the feelings of humanity, is rather paradoxical: the cruelties of the inquisition and other mis-named Christian tribunals proceed from a different cause: they were originally actuated by the spirit of Christianity; although bigotry may have strangely perverted its benevolent influence. In the sacrifice of a Hindoo widow, (and some thousands are annually sacrificed,) Religion herself inculcates the horrid deed; the laws of Menu approve it; and the priests of Brahma, who affect to shudder at the death of an insect, assist at the destruction of this most lovely part of the creation.

Although mingled with other sensations, it is pleasing to see the inhabitants of Pulparra, and most other towns and villages on the banks of the Tappee, Narbudda, and principal rivers of Hindostan, repair to the water to perform their devotions; no morning dawns, no evening closes without this pious ceremony. That the Hindoos worship the Ganges there is, I believe, no doubt, because a peculiar sanctity is annexed to its stream: in an inferior degree they seem to venerate other rivers; and generally enter them twice a-day, not only to perform their devotions, but to purify their bodies, and wash their garments: both sexes assemble for the same purpose, and shift their clothes in the water, without the least idea of infringing the laws of decency.

After performing their religious ablutions, the Hindoos receive on their forehead the mark either of Visnoo or Siva; this mark, affixed by a Brahmin, varies in form and colour, according to the sect they profess; the one being horizontal, the other perpendicular: it is made from a composition of sandal-wood, turmeric, and cow-dung; the latter is deemed peculiarly sacred. The mark on the forehead is frequently alluded to in the Sacred Scriptures, as characteristic of the righteous and the wicked: we read of those who had the mark of the beast; and of those blessed and happy beings, who were admitted to the pure river of the water of life, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the lamb, whose name was written on their foreheads; and who had not received the mark of the beast upon their foreheads, nor on their hands. This is a holy ceremony which has been adopted in all ages by the eastern nations, however differing in religious

professions. Among the Hindoos of both sexes, and all descriptions, among the castes permitted to attend the temple worship, it is daily practised. To the Jews it was well known, as also to the Mahomedans.

The sacred groves of Pulparra, are the general resort for all the Yogees, Senassees, and Hindoo pilgrims who visit Surat, from the most remote regions of Hindostan; the whole district is holy, and the Tappee in that part has a more than common sanctity: all ablutions in a river are thought to be more efficacious than an immersion in stagnant water, the Levitical law enjoined the leper to bathe in the running stream; the Hindoos annex to it a greater degree of purity than in any tank at their temples These devotees are great travellers, they wander, either collectively or individually, from the confines of Russia to Cape Comorin; and from the borders of China to Malabar-hill on the island of Bombay, where there is a fane of much celebrity. Plutarch mentions one of them, named Calanus, who followed Alexander from India· being seized with a dysentery at Pasagardus, he prepared his own funeral pile; and, after performing some religious ceremonies, laid himself on it with great composure, until burnt to death. Diodorus describes the immolation of an Indian widow two thousand years ago, in the army of Eumenes, who burnt herself on the funeral pile of her husband, in the manner I have just related.

CHAPTER XI.

Voyage from Bombay to Anjengo—Geographical Division of the Malabar Coast—Goa—Monkish Convents—Commerce—Portuguese Domination—Carwar—Mirzee and Baicelore, the ancient Musiris and Barace—Fortified Island—Onore—Malabar Frontier—Mangulore—Gigantic Statue at Kukul—Cannanore—Tellicherry—Cardamom—Dumapatam Island—Coffee Plantations—Ordeal Trials in Malabar—Mucuars at Tellicherry—Mahie—Sacrifice Rock—Edible Bird-Nests—Calicut—Vapura—Grand Appearance of the Gaut Mountains—Cochin—Mattancherry—Jews-town—Porca, Caillquilone—Quilone—Eddova—Anjengo—Catamaran—Hippocampus

Soon after leaving Surat, I was appointed a member of the Council at Anjengo, the most southern of the English settlements on the Malabar coast, about six hundred miles from Bombay, in the latitude of 8° 39′ north We sailed from that island the beginning of February, 1772, and in a fortnight arrived at Anjengo, after a delightful voyage, during which we stopped at most of the principal places on the coast.

A favourable breeze soon carried us past Fort Victoria, the next day, sailing along the mountainous shores of the Concan, we had a distinct view of Rutnah-Gheriah, and several other Mahratta fortresses, we then looked into the harbour of Gheriah, the chief sea-port on the Malabar coast, defended by a

strong fortification, and surrounded by a rich territory. Gheriah is in the latitude of 16° 37′ north, twenty-three leagues from Goa, in which distance are the forts of Raree and Augustus, conquered by the English, from the Malwans, in 1765, then lately ransomed: still nearer to Goa is Vingorla, a small town in a hilly country, where the India Company had at that time a factory, and collected a small revenue.

The mountainous shore of the Concan is improperly called a part of the Malabar coast; but as the western side of the Indian peninsula, almost from Surat to Cape Comorin, is generally included under that denomination, I will briefly describe the existing boundaries of the kingdoms and provinces in that part of the globe called by geographers the Hither-India.

The most northern district was the Deccan; bounded on the north by Guzerat, east by Golconda and Berar, south by Visiapoor, and west by the Indian ocean: Aurungabad, Satarra, and Poonah, were the principal inland cities: Poonah, from an obscure village, became, after the Brahmin usurpation, the capital of the Mahratta empire. The sea-ports were Tull, Dundee, Dabul, and Choule, once belonging to the Portuguese, but then to the Mahrattas, who possessed the whole coast: Bombay, Salsette, and all the contiguous islands were included in this division.

The next was the kingdom of Visiapoor, extending north and south, from Gheriah to the spot called the Malabar frontier, near Mangulore: this division was bounded on the east by the Ghaut mountains, on the west by the Indian ocean; Visiapoor was the chief inland city; Gheriah, Goa, Carwar, Barcelore, and Onore, the principal sea-ports: the Mahratta, and a

few dependent Hindoo princes, possessed the northern districts, except Goa, the conquests of Hyder Ally added the country of Visiapoor to his dominions.

The third and last division was that of Malabar; which extended from the Malabar frontier north, to Cape Comorin, south: the Gauts were its eastern boundary, the ocean its western. That part of the coast was divided among many independent sovereigns: the principal towns were Mangulore, Cananore, Tellicherry, Mahie, Calicut, Panana, Cranganore, Cochin, Porca, Quilone, Anjengo, and Coletchee: in this division, properly termed the Malabar coast, the persons, language, religion, and manners of the natives, differ very much from those in the northern districts.

We anchored in the spacious and beautiful harbour of Goa, which I have before described in my voyage from England to Bombay. On landing I beheld magnificent structures mouldering into ruin; the streets were faintly traced by the remains of their forsaken mansions, and squares and markets, once populous, were now the haunt of serpents and noxious reptiles: the few inhabitants were priests, monks, half-starved soldiers, and low mechanics. Notwithstanding the general decline of Goa, the churches and convents retained their grandeur, and were in good repair: the Augustin monastery was very handsome, and the church of San Caitan exhibited a beautiful specimen of Italian architecture.

The Jesuits' College, one of the largest and most conspicuous edifices in Goa, contained apartments for several hundred of that society; after their expulsion, it was inhabited by monks of a different order: the church, dedicated to St. Francis Xavier, is a fine struc-

ture, the high altar richly ornamented, and the chapel containing the monument of St. Xavier, uncommonly splendid; the tomb, enclosed by glass to prevent damage, is only opened on particular occasions: we were admitted within the sacred enclosure, to examine the bassi-relievi, which in different compartments contain the life and miracles of the saint· the whole is composed of the choicest marble, sculptured by European artists: the superb shrine and silver ornaments were presented by a queen of Portugal.

I shall not detail the extraordinary legends which the priests gave us of their favourite saint, nor describe the more substantial entertainment they produced in the refectory. On leaving their convivial circle we visited several monkish convents, and the only nunnery then existing in the city; where, as usual, we saw many objects to pity, few to envy. on this subject I shall not enlarge, nor on that of the Inquisition, the next public structure that we viewed: the cruelties inflicted on the native converts at Goa, especially among the wealthy Hindoos, made me shudder on entering the exterior courts of this iniquitous tribunal, which were all we were permitted to see: its history in Spain and Portugal is well known: the inquisitors at Goa have not been more merciful: how has misguided zeal tarnished a religion founded in loving-kindness and tender mercy! how have the judges of the Inquisition departed from the benevolent spirit of its Founder! what must the surrounding Hindoos think of the fires, the racks, and instruments of torture used in that merciless prison? Its cruel tyrants, clothed in the vestments of sanctity, but destitute of pity, have spared neither age, nor sex, nor condition, in human sacri-

fices to the God of mercy, and the compassionate Redeemer of man! Mistaken zealots! truly do ye fulfil the awful words, that he came not to send peace upon earth, but a sword! a sword too often wielded by those who are strangers to the merciful spirit of his Gospel.

Goa, situated in 15° 28′ north latitude, and 72° 45′ east latitude, was one of the finest European settlements in India; where the Portuguese generally kept a strong force of Europeans, and Topasses, who are the offspring of the Europeans and natives; their pay was small, but procured a sufficiency of rice and fish. The oil expressed from the cocoa-nut is exported from Goa, and forms a considerable article of commerce; it was also famous for the arrack, to which it gave its name; but that made at Batavia is now generally preferred. this spirit is distilled either from rice, sugar-cane, or the juice of the cocoa-nut tree: the fruit and flowers of several other trees in Hindostan produce by distillation, a spirit, to which the Europeans give the general name of arrack Goa is famous for the Alphonso mango, a delicious fruit, which is sent in presents to other parts of India, mangos are abundant in the adjoining districts, but the Alphonso is as superior to the others, as the nonpareil to the crab-apple.

The commerce of Goa, and the northern parts of Diu and Damaun, is now unimportant; the rice, arrack, and oil, are exported to different parts of India; one or two ships annually arrive from Europe with military stores and other articles, and return thither with printed cottons from Surat, and a few eastern necessaries for Portugal and her American

colonies: this, with two or three vessels trading in Chinese articles from Macao to the Malabar coast, now comprise the whole of the Portuguese commerce in India.

Yet this is the nation, that in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries called the Asiatic seas her own, and astonished the eastern world by her martial exploits: the discoveries of Gama, and the conquests of Albuquerque, were truly glorious: the latter subdued Goa in 1510, and secured many valuable possessions to the crown of Portugal. The emancipation of the Netherlands from the tyranny of Philip, was the principal cause of the decline of the Portuguese in India: they were then subject to Spain; and the Hollanders, no longer groaning under the yoke of Alva, sent a large armament from Europe, who conquered Cochin, Ceylon, the Spice Islands, and many other Portuguese settlements; their ruin in Asia was also accelerated by the vices of their governors and principal officers; the sudden influx of wealth wrought a dreadful change in their moral character: the noble conduct and patriotic virtues of the first conquerors were annihilated by the venality and corruption of their successors. De Gama, Albuquerque, and de Castro, appear a different race from D'Acughna, Coree, and the other monsters, whose atrocities have fixed an indelible stain on the annals of Portugal: their rapacity and cruelty, united to superstitious tyranny, occasioned a rapid downfall, from which they never recovered.

Many countries in the vicinity of Goa have at different times been almost depopulated by the mistaken policy, bigotry, and oppressions of the Portuguese government; especially the district of Kankana; from

whence, Dr. Buchanan says, the inhabitants fled to Tulava, near Mangulore, to avoid a persecution in their native country, and are still called *Kankanies*. An order arrived from the King of Portugal to convert all the natives: the viceroy being a lenient man, on the receipt of the order, permitted those who choose to retire to carry away their effects, and allowed them fifteen days to arrange their affairs: accordingly, all the rich Brahmins and Sudras retired to Tulava, with such of their property as they could at that time realize; they now chiefly subsist by trade, and many are in flourishing circumstances. The poor Kankanies who remained in the Portuguese dominions, were all converted to Christianity, if the religion professed and practised by the Malabar converts can deserve that appellation.

In the second geographical division of the Malabar coast, I mentioned Goa among the cities in Visiapoor: this part of India, including the Concan and Deccan (which latter word means the south country, relatively to the northern provinces of Hindostan), has been from time immemorial inhabited by the nations of Canara and Malabar; people from Merhat and Telinga, mingled among them in the northern districts: until the middle of the sixteenth century, it formed a considerable part of the vast empire of Bezenegur, now generally written Vijeyanuggur, or more properly, Vijayanagara; in ancient days it was one of the most splendid cities in the east: and the capital of an empire, which nominally comprised under its jurisdiction the greater part of the southern Peninsula: the dominions of Travancore, and some of the countries near

Cape Comorin, are the only districts which preserved their independence, and by their distance were protected by the powerful sovereigns of Vijayanagara. In the sixteenth century, five of the Mahomedan princes who had usurped the dominion of their respective governments, north of the Kistnah, ambitious of new conquests, and of making converts to the Mussulman religion, confederated in a war against Ram Raje, the Hindoo monarch of Bezenegur, who was killed in battle, A. D. 1565. In consequence of his death, and a disputed succession, many of the naiks, or governors of provinces, become independent: and formed the modern Hindoo government of Mysore, Trichinopoly, Madura, Tanjore, and some others: at the same time the zamorine of Calicut, the king of Travancore, and different Malabar princes, shook off all dependence upon the Hindoo empire, whose seat of government was removed from Bezenegur to Penekonda.

About this period, the Mahomedan prince of Bejapour, or Visiapoor, under his general Mustapha Khan, assisted by Sahoo Bhosla, reduced the Carnatic Balagaut, afterwards called Bejapoury; and descending into the Payen-gaut, conquered the new principalities of Tanjore, Trichinopoly, and Ginjee. Meer Jumlah, another Mahomedan chief, was at the same time performing similar exploits in other quarters: they enjoyed their conquests only a very short time; for in 1687, the emperor Aurungzebe subverted their dominions, and reduced them to saubahs, or provinces, of the Mogul empire, placing them under the command of viceroys, or nabobs; who for some time paid a tribute, and did homage to the imperial government at

Delhi; but at length, on the imbecility and decline of the empire, they also threw off their allegiance, and became independent sovereigns.

We sailed from Goa with the land-wind, and the next morning were off Carwar, a town of importance during the flourishing state of the Portuguese: the English had formerly a factory for the purchase of pepper, which has been for many years deserted: there are still a number of Portuguese inhabitants, with a bishop and inferior clergy, the Roman Catholic churches at Bombay are in the diocese of Carwar.

In the neighbouring country, the peasants manufacture catechu, or terra-Japonica, from the Keiri tree (mimosa catechu) which grows wild on the hills of Kankana, but in no other part of the Indian peninsula.

Not far from Onore we passed Mirzee, and afterwards Barcelore, two places famous for pepper, which grow spontaneously in those districts; as also the laurus cassia, and wild nutmeg.

These towns are supposed to be the Musiris and Barace of the ancients; whither Hippalus made the first voyage from the Arabian gulf: a voyage from Arabia to the coast of Malabar was then deemed of so much importance, that the monsoon wind, which wafted him over a tract of ocean hitherto unattempted, was called Hippalus, after this celebrated navigator. Previously to this bold undertaking, the merchant vessels belonging to the Egyptians and Arabians had sailed from Berenice in the Red-Sea, along the Arabian shore to the promontory of Syagrus, now Cape Rasalgate; and held their course along the coast of Persia, to the different ports in India where they traded.

The sight of Mirzee recalled to mind its former importance in the oriental commerce: nothing can be more clear or satisfactory, than Pliny's account of the trade to Musiris; and Arrian, describing the imports from the Arabian gulf, at that port, says they were much the same as those I have already mentioned at Surat; but as it lay nearer to the eastern parts of India, and seems to have had much communication with them, the commodities exported from it were more numerous and more valuable. He specifies particularly, pearls in great abundance, and of extraordinary beauty, a variety of silk stuffs, rich perfumes, tortoiseshell, different kinds of transparent gems, especially diamonds; and pepper in large quantities, and of the best quality.

After leaving Mirzee there was nothing worthy of observation, until we passed Fortified Island, a little to the northward of Onore; it is about a mile in circumference, rocky, barren, and so strong both by nature and art, as to be deemed impregnable: it then belonged to the nabob Hyder Ally Caun, as did Onore, and all the adjoining territory.

Passing Fortified Island, we anchored off Onore, or *Honawera*, as it is called by the natives: the fort was situated on a rising ground, near a small town of indifferent houses; the best was the English factory, where two of the Company's servants resided, to purchase pepper and sandal wood, for the English and Chinese markets: a considerable private trade was carried on with Bombay and the northern ports, in betel nuts, and other articles.

Onore river, or rather a salt lake, is navigable at spring-tides for small vessels; it is indeed connected

with a small river which flows from the inland mountains, through a hilly country whose romantic rocks are softened by a wild assemblage of trees: among them the silk-cotton (bombax ceiba, Lin.), and the decannee-bean (butea superba), are very conspicuous; the former covered with buds and flowers of crimson, and the scarlet papilionaceous blossoms of the latter, contrasted by their black stalks, give a brilliant effect to the western woods, and appear at sun-set like immense forests in a glow of fire These sylvan regions are the haunt of tigers, and other wild beasts already described.

The low lands contiguous to Onore are well cultivated, and planted with cocoa-nut trees, areca, pepper, rice, and inferior grains, but the most valuable production in this part of India is the sandal, or saunders tree (santalum album, Linn)

The sandal tree is indigenous on the rocky hills in the Onore districts, and if permitted would grow to a tolerable size, but the wood is so valuable, that the tree is cut down at an early stage, and we seldom meet with any more than a foot broad, the wood is either red, yellow, or a whitish brown; and from its colour and size, is called the first, second, and third sort of sandal wood, each varying in price; the best from one hundred and fifty to two hundred rupees the coudy, of five hundred and sixty pounds weight. The wood of the brightest colour and strongest scent is most esteemed, having a fine grain and an aromatic smell, which it communicates to every thing near it, it is, therefore, much used in small cabinets, escritoires, and similar articles, as no insect can exist, nor iron rust, within its influence: from the

dust and shavings is extracted an aromatic oil; the oil and wood are used by the Hindoos and Parsees in their religious ceremonies; but the greatest part of the latter is reserved for the China markets, where it sells to great advantage.

The sandal is a beautiful tree; the branches regular and tapering; the leaf like the narrow willow, shorter, and delicately soft; the blossoms hang in bunches of small flowers, either red or white, according to the colour of the wood; the fruit is small, and valuable only for its seed: the tree thrives in a hilly rocky situation, and there produces wood of the finest grain and strongest scent: on low land, and a richer soil, it degenerates, and is in all respects less esteemed.

It is often extremely difficult, as well as dangerous, to transport merchandize over Onore bar, on account of a tremendous surf. I never thought myself in such imminent danger as in attempting a passage through these surges: a little before my arrival, a young gentleman in the Company's civil service was overset in a ship's boat, and all perished! We took the advantage of the land wind at midnight to return to the vessel, when the surf was moderate.

A pleasant land-breeze wafted us from Onore, in passing by Barcelore to the fortress called the Malabar Frontier, where we properly entered on the Malabar coast: we anchored the same evening at Mangulore, in 12° 50′ north latitude, and 74° 44′ east longitude. It was then the principal sea-port of Hyder Ally, nabob of the Mysore, well situated for commerce, and frequented by foreign merchants for pepper, sandal-wood, rice, and betel-nuts.

The entrance into the river, or rather a salt-water

lake, near which the town was built, is difficult and dangerous, occasioned by a rapid current running into the sea through a narrow channel in the sandy beach, which extends along the coast: this entrance was defended by batteries; the principal fortress stood on the opposite side of the river, near a populous town; the houses were generally mean, and there were no public buildings of importance. During the succeeding wars with Hyder Ally, and his son Tippoo Sultaun, Mangulore, Onore, and the other sea-ports in their dominions, underwent a total change.

At Kurkul, near Mangulore, is a celebrated Hindoo temple of great antiquity, and a gigantic image of *Gómatéswar;* inferior in size, but of a similar kind, to the famous idol, named *Gómatéswar Swami,* at Belligola, or *Sravana-Belligola,* the principal residence of the *Guroos,* or high priests belonging to the sect of *Jains,* a singular and separate tribe among the Hindoos, particularly described in the Asiatic Researches. The image at Belligola is said to be eighteen times the height of a man, but this I imagine to be exaggerated upon examining the engravings accompanying the account, where a man of the usual height stands upon the terrace near the gigantic figure, to shew the comparative height of art and nature: when these drawings were taken in 1801, the foot of the statue was measured, and found to be nine feet in length; hence the height of the statue is estimated at fifty-four feet. The records of the *Jains* also mention a golden image, of five hundred times the height of a man; which was inundated by the sea: but they believe it can still be sometimes seen at low water.

We staid a very short time at Mangulore, most of

which was sacrificed to a formal visit at the governor's durbar, a Mahomedan oppressor, in great favour with his sovereign Hyder Ally; I should otherwise have gone to Kurkul, and some interesting places in its vicinity.

The etiquette of the Mangulore durbar detained us until a late hour; when we returned on board, and sailed with the land-breeze for Tellicherry, along a hilly coast, particularly near mount Dilla, a high woody cape, twenty miles from Tellicherry. We next passed Cannanore, a large sea-port town belonging to a Mahomedan prince called Ally Rajah, who was also sovereign of the Maldivæ islands. Cannanore carried on a considerable trade in pepper and cocoa-nuts, and was situated in a beautiful country, the sea-coast being enriched by extensive groves of cocoa-nuts, with cultivated plains between them and the Gatte mountains.

Tellicherry was at that time a principal settlement of the English, in the latitude of 11° 48′ north, and 75° 23′ east longitude: the town, enclosed by a slight wall, contained several good houses, belonging to the English, and native Portuguese: situated on a rising ground near the sea, it was constantly refreshed by the western breeze; and, from the salubrity of the air, was called the Montpelier of India. The fort was large and well garrisoned; it contained an excellent house for the chief, with barracks and other public buildings: about a mile to the southward was another English fort, called Moylan, and batteries on the adjacent hills; but after the wars with the Mysore sultauns, the whole system on the Malabar coast was altered, and the present civil and military appointments in that quarter are foreign to the subject. Provisions were cheap and

plentiful, especially fish, in great variety; it was famous for fine sardinias and excellent oysters. The trade consisted in pepper, sandal-wood, cocoa-nuts, cardamoms, and ureca, the produce of the country; with shark's-fins, dried fish, and similar articles.

The cocoa-nut groves on the sea coast in this part of Malabar, are very extensive: I have fully described this valuable tree at Bombay: in Malabar, from the time the nut is planted, until the tree begins to bear fruit, is about twelve years; it continues in perfection for fifty or sixty years: and then, although in a decaying state, bears fruit twenty years longer.

The low lands produce abundance of rice. The plantations of pepper in this part of Malabar are extensive and valuable; the jacs, mangos, and other high trees, on which the vines are trained, add much to the general beauty of the country.

The cardamom (amomum repens, Lin.), which grows in this part of Malabar, is a spice much esteemed by the Asiatics; they chew it separately, or with betel: it is a principal ingredient in their cookery, and used medicinally as a stomachic. The plant in appearance resembles the ginger; it attains the height of two or three feet, and sometimes more, before it bears fruit; the blossoms are small, white, and variegated with purple; some have a brownish appearance; they are succeeded by small green pods, containing the seeds, which become of a light brown when the seed ripens, grows black, and acquires the aromatic flavour for which it is so estimable.

This valuable spice is indigenous to many parts of Malabar, but flourishes most on the acclivity of moist

cool hills, among low trees, bushes, and little springs of water. Although the cardamom delights in such a situation, it will grow in other places; and is sometimes planted in gardens and orchards of plantain trees; the roots are taken up and divided. The cardamom hills are generally private property; when the plants are discovered, they are preserved with great care, by cutting down the bushes, and attending to the shoots for three years, at which time they begin to bear; they have attained their full growth, and produce the best crops in the fourth year, after which they generally decay. The plants spring up in the rainy season; those under cultivation are not permitted to grow too close to each other; when it so happens, the roots are divided, and planted at a greater distance: the seed begins to ripen about the middle of September, and continues more or less for the space of two months. The capsules, or seed-pods, sometimes grow on a high stalk, often in short clusters near the root: such as are ripe are daily gathered, and carefully dried for sale; otherwise the birds and squirrels would carry off a large share It is supposed these animals scatter the seed in the unfrequented spots, where the cardamom is often unexpectedly found: diligent search is always made for the springing plants at the commencement of the rainy season. I was informed that in some places they burn the bushes, which are always cut down at that time; as the ashes produce an excellent manure without injuring the growing plant.

There were some thriving coffee plantations on the island of Durmapatam near Tellicherry; the seed was

originally brought from Mocha, but the Malabar coffee is inferior in flavour and refreshment to the Arabian berry: it is a beautiful plant in its foliage, blossoms, and fruit, but too well known to need a description.

The ordeal trials, mentioned in other parts of these volumes, were frequently practised at Tellicherry, even under the sanction of the British government: this custom, so contrary to the general opinion in Europe, is universally admitted by the sovereigns of Malabar. When a man, accused of a capital crime, chooses to undergo the ordeal trial, he is closely confined for several days, his right hand and arm are covered with thick wax-cloth, tied up and sealed, in the presence of proper officers, to prevent deceit: in the English districts the covering was always sealed with the Company's arms, and the prisoner placed under an European guard. At the time fixed for the ordeal, a cauldron of oil is placed over a fire; when it boils, a piece of money is dropped into the vessel; the prisoner's arm is unsealed, and washed in the presence of his judges and accusers: during this part of the ceremony, the attendant Brahmins supplicate the deity. On receiving their benediction the accused plunges his hand into the boiling fluid, and takes out the coin: this I believe is sometimes repeated. The arm is afterwards again sealed up, until the time appointed for a re-examination: the seal is then broken; if no blemish appears the prisoner is declared innocent; if the contrary, he suffers the punishment due to his crime.

Nine kinds of ordeal are enumerated; but I shall here confine myself to what is said on that by oil.—"The ordeal by the vessel of oil, according to the

comment on the Dherma Sastra, is thus performed: the ground appropriated for the trial is cleared, and rubbed with cow-dung; and the next day, at sun-rise, the pundit worships Ganesa, presents his oblations, and pays adoration to other deities, conformable to the Sastra: then, having read the incantation prescribed, he places a round pan of gold, silver, copper, iron or clay, with a diameter of sixteen fingers, and four fingers deep; and throws into it one seer, or eighty sicca weight of clarified butter, or oil of sesamum. After this a ring of gold, or silver, or iron, is cleaned and washed with water, and cast into the oil, which they proceed to heat; when it is very hot they put into it a fresh leaf of pippala, or bilwa; when the leaf is burned, the oil is known to be sufficiently hot. Then, having pronounced a mentra over the oil, they order the party accused to take the ring out of the pan; and if he take it out without being burned, or without a blister on his hand, his innocence is considered as proved: if not, his guilt."

"On the trial by fire, the accused thus addresses the element: 'Thou, O Fire! pervadest all beings: O cause of purity! who givest evidence of virtue and of sin, declare the truth in this my hand.' In the ordeal by poison, the accused pronounces, 'Thou, O Poison! art the child of Brahma, stedfast in justice and in truth! clear me from this heavy charge; and, if I have spoken truly, become nectar to me!"

The Muckwas, or Mucuars, at Tellicherry, are an industrious useful set of people; some are Mahomedans, some Hindoos: they are considered a very low tribe among the Malabars, but are more valuable in society than many of higher pretensions: they make

excellent palankeen-bearers, boatmen, fishermen, and porters of goods from the landing place to the store-houses. Some of the young women are pleasing in their countenance and person, which is generally very much exposed; their clothing consisting only of a white cotton cloth round the middle. The Hindoo Mucuars are kept in a most degraded state by the Brahmins, who allow them to eat all animal food, except beef: they may also drink strong liquors; and are not very nice in their matrimonial connexions. Dr. F. Buchanan says, "the deity of this caste is the goddess *Bhadra-Kali*, who is represented by a log of wood, placed in a hut that is called a temple: they assemble four times a-year to sacrifice a cock, and make offerings of fruit to the log: one of the caste acts as priest, but his office is not hereditary. The Mucuars are not admitted to enter within the precincts of any of the temples dedicated to the great gods of the Brahmins, but they sometimes stand at a distance, and send their offerings by more pure hands: they seem to know nothing of a state of future existence; but believe in evil spirits, who inflict diseases, and occasion other misfortunes."

During our stay at Tellicherry, I spent an agreeable day at Mahie, a French settlement, a few miles to the southward, pleasantly situated on the banks of a river; trading chiefly in pepper, cocoa-nuts, and cardamums.

Sailing southward, we passed near Sacrifice-rock, a small island, so called from the crew of an English ship having been massacred there by pirates, the beginning of the seventeenth century. It is famous for the edible birds-nests, found in the clefts of the rocks,

which are esteemed so luxurious a dainty in China, as to have become a considerable article of commerce: the greatest quantity are produced on the coasts of Malacca. These nests are three or four inches in circumference, and one in depth: formed by a bird of the swallow tribe (hirundo, nidis edulibus), either with the spawn of fish, or a glutinous frothy scum, which the sea leaves on the rock. Shark's fins are also eaten, they are dried in large quantities at the fishing towns on the Malabar coast, and constitute a valuable article of trade to China. The drying of these fins, sardinias, and other fish, all along this coast, renders the atmosphere extremely offensive, if not unwholesome; their putrid effluviæ generally overpower the aromatic odours, which would otherwise be wafted by the morning breeze from groves of cassia, sandal, and champach. The sharks' fins are sold at a reasonable price; but the newest and most transparent nests of the hirundo, are purchased by the Chinese at five or six dollars the pound. Those of an older fabric, dry, and less pellucid, are not so valuable.

A favourable wind carried us quickly from Sacrifice-rock to Calicut, in the latitude of 11° 18′ north: it is memorable, as being the place where Vasco de Gama, and his hardy followers, first landed from Europe in 1498; and where the English established a factory in 1616, which at present offers very little to interest a traveller, being chiefly composed of low huts, shaded by cocoa-nut trees, on a sandy shore. In this unpleasant situation, the English, French, Danes, and Portuguese, had their respective factories, where they hoisted their national flags; and purchased pepper, cocoa-nuts, coir-cables, and ropes, betel-nuts, timber,

oil, and other articles. Beyond this sandy tract is a fertile plain, extending to the Gaut mountains; which in that part of the peninsula are of a stupendous height, and visible at sea seventy miles distance.

Calicut road, where the ships anchor, is deemed unsafe for those not well acquainted with the navigation; several vessels have been wrecked upon the ruins of the old city, now under water; as the mean town just described, formed no part of that emporium where de Gama landed. Calicut is said to have been then a large city, where the Zamorine, the sovereign of the country, held a splendid court, and merchants resorted from Persia, Arabia, Africa, and different parts of India, to purchase pearls, diamonds, spices, ivory, and other costly articles. From thence the persevering Vasco freighted the first ship to Europe, and introduced those oriental luxuries in much greater abundance, and at a cheaper rate, than they had been imported formerly by the Greeks of Constantinople, or the Venetians, who succeeded them in that valuable commerce.

The water-snakes, black monkeys, and black-boned fowls, with which this coast abounds, like the native inhabitants of Malabar, remain unchanged; but the European settlements on the coast have been all metamorphosed since the French revolution, and the wars with the sovereigns of Mysore. The poultry, with a black skin and black bones, though disagreeable at first to strangers, are found to be more delicate in flavour, and superior in whiteness to the other kind: the hogs, fowls, and ducks in the southern parts of the coast, feed so much upon fish, that their flesh is frequently unpleasant, and offensive

A few miles from Calicut is a small sea-port, called Vapura, pleasantly situated on the banks of a river; from whence a great quantity of teak-wood is exported, and where vessels are built of that timber. These valuable trees are felled on the Gaut mountains, and transported from thence to the river-side by elephants: where they remain to be floated down to Vapura, when the stream fills in the rainy season

This part of Malabar also produce the chapingum, or sapanwood (gullandina sapan): the trees are planted in gardens and orchards, for the sake of the wood, which produces a valuable dye.

From Calicut, we proceeded to Cochin, and arrived there on the 14th, after sailing along a bold coast of cocoa-nut trees and rice-fields, extending over a sandy plain to the Gaut mountains, whose majestic summits in the morning are generally enveloped in clouds; but towards sun-set, their western acclivities display an assemblage of rocks and woods, in broad masses of light and shadow, which rival the Alps and Appenines of Europe; although deficient in those pinnacles and glaciers, whose sublimity and beauty, seen through the clear atmosphere of an Italian winter, baffle the artist's skill, and defy the power of language.

Cochin, in the latitude of 9° 58′ north, and 76° east longitude, was among the early conquests of the Portuguese; from them it fell into the hands of the Dutch, and is now in possession of the English. The town is pleasantly situated at the entrance of a broad navigable river, or more properly a lake, which extends southerly for near twenty leagues to Quilone, another Dutch factory, affording an inland navigation through that part of the king of Cochin's dominions. It was

surrounded by a fortification, built by the Portuguese; of no great strength except towards the sea; the garrison consisted of five hundred Europeans, and a few Malay troops.

I have occasionally resided there several weeks, when transacting business for the India Company: it was a place of great trade, and presented a striking contrast to Goa; a harbour filled with ships, streets crowded with merchants, and warehouses stored with goods from every part of Asia and Europe, marked the industry, the commerce, and the wealth of the inhabitants.

The phlegmatic and formal character of the native Hollander generally accompanies him to other climates; but at Cochin, a constant intercourse with strangers had effected a pleasing change. I always received the kindest attention from the governor and principal inhabitants; their tables were furnished with hospitality, and graced with politeness; their houses and gardens displayed the national cleanliness and neatness. Provisions of all kinds abounded; in the rainy season, when no ships frequent the port, a turkey cost only half a rupee; fowls and ducks in proportion: the beef, though small, was well-flavoured, and very cheap; as were fruit, vegetables, and other refreshments for the numerous vessels which touch there in the fair season. Europeans and natives find the water unwholesome; drinking it frequently causes that disagreeable disorder called the *Cochin-leg*, or elephantiasis, which is deemed incurable: it is the same as the lepra arabum, and considered as a species of leprosy. I have seen many with a leg thicker than their body; on the naked limbs of the natives it

has a disgusting appearance; to the leg of a European, with a silk-stocking, shoe and buckle, something ludicrous is annexed, the Asiatic garb would be more comely. The swelling generally commences at the knee, and continues of the same wonderful circumference to the foot; few persons are affected in both legs; and I believe they are insensible of any other inconvenience than that of dragging such a cumbrous load.

During my residence at Anjengo, I was deputed to transact some money concerns between the English Company and the Jews of Cochin; they do not reside in the city, but at Jews-town, or Mottancherec, situated on the banks of the river, about a mile distant; where they have two large synagogues, and many excellent houses and gardens, are allowed the free exercise of their religion, and carry on the principal trade of the settlement. Jews from Poland, Spain, and other parts of Europe, were intermingled with those established in Malabar, many ages before the discovery of India by the Cape of Good Hope.

They are a people distinct and separate from the surrounding Malabars, in dress, manners, and religion, as well as in their complexion and general appearance. This Hebrew colony is said to have emigrated from Judea soon after the destruction of the second Temple by Titus Vespasian; when a number of these devoted people, escaping from the dreadful massacres and sale of captives at Jerusalem, emigrated from Palestine to India: a country probably not unknown to the Jews in more prosperous days, at least to those tribes situated near Tyre and Sidon. The Medes, Persians, and Abyssinians, had a com-

munication with distant parts of India for articles of luxury; and that they carried on a considerable trade to its remote provinces before Alexander's conquest, is evident from Strabo, Pliny, and other writers; exclusive of the maritime commerce already mentioned, from the Periplus and Grecian historians. It is therefore not improbable that some Jewish families, on their dispersion at the First Captivity, or at some subsequent period, may have wandered to the Malabar coast; which my venerable informer assured me was believed by his people to have been the case with part of the tribe of Manasseh.

The fate of the expatriated Jews who wandered to India after the destruction of the second Temple, until their arrival in Malabar, at the conclusion of the fifth century of the Christian æra, is, I believe, no where authenticated. At that period the colony reached their place of destination; the sovereign of the country, a Brahmin, treated them with kindness, and allowed them to settle at Cranganore with considerable privileges. There they were established many centuries, increasing in wealth and consequence, until, from dissensions among themselves, they called in the aid of surrounding princes, and after much cruelty and bloodshed, were driven from Cranganore, with the loss of their possessions and property.

These unhappy fugitives were thus separated and dispersed among the Malabar districts, until a remnant again collected, and were permitted by the king of Cochin to settle at Mottancheree, on the banks of Cochin river, where their descendants have continued ever since.

In their possession is a royal grant of Cranganore,

and the district allotted to their ancestors, on their first establishment in Malabar, engraved on metal, and signed by the Brahmin sovereign of the country. This is since confirmed by Dr. Claudius Buchanan, who procured a fac-simile, engraven on copper, from the original brass tablet which he saw in the possession of the Cochin Jews in 1807; he has also published a translation from that made by the Jews into the Hebrew language; the original grant, as dated in the Malabar annals, corresponds with the year 490 of the Christian æra.

The history of the Jews is the most wonderful of any in the annals of time. They are indeed a standing miracle! and however modern philosophy may raise doubts of revelation in some particulars, a people scattered over the face of the earth, yet preserved distinct and separate from every nation among whom they dwell, affords incontrovertible evidence of its truth. We trace them from the call of Abraham in Chaldea, and rest with delight at the tents and wells of the patriarchal shepherds: from those pastoral scenes we accompany them to Egypt, sympathizing in their captivity and oppressions under an ungrateful monarch, and rejoice in their deliverance from cruel bondage: we share in their adventures in the wilderness, and participate in their wars and conquests in Canaan. Established there, and dissatisfied with the theocracy, we view them under the regal government, in a progressive increase of wealth and population, until, at the conclusion of David's reign, the men of Israel who drew the sword were a thousand thousand, and a hundred thousand, and Judah was four hundred threescore and ten thousand men; all descended in a direct

line from Abraham, the pastoral patriarch. In the reign of Solomon the temporal prophecies were completed; the wealth, power, and greatness of that extraordinary monarch, surpassed all the kings of the earth: but, alas! Solomon forgot the guide of his youth; and in his old age built altars, and sacrificed unto the gods of his strange wives. His example was followed by many of his successors, until their idolatry became so abominable in the sight of JEHOVAH, who had peculiarly styled himself the GOD of Israel, that, after a succession of heavy judgments, blended with signal mercies, he finally withdrew his protection from the ungrateful tribes of Israel and Judah; and Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came with a large army and besieged Jerusalem, carrying away all who had escaped the sword captives to Babylon, where they became servants and slaves for seventy years. There we behold them in a deplorable state of captivity, hanging their harps upon the willows of Euphrates, and suffering a cruel bondage until released by the decree of Cyrus: then, with their millions reduced to forty-two thousand, they were numbered by hundreds, and by twenties, in their small encampment near the river Ahava: there Ezra, their pious leader, proclaimed a fast, and prostrated himself before the GOD of Israel, who had delivered their fathers, their kings, and their priests, to the sword, to captivity, and to spoil; but had now extended his mercy to them in the sight of the kings of Persia, and had left a remnant to escape, and to set up the house of GOD, and to repair the desolations of Jerusalem! Their history is still interesting, from the building of the second Temple until the final destruction of Jerusalem by Titus; predicted by the