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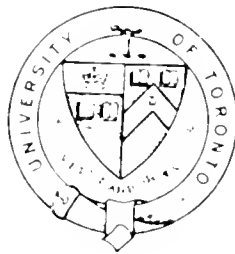


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CONTAINING A

HISTORICAL ACCOUNT

OF THE

RELIGIOUS, LITERARY, MANNERS, CUSTOMS,

AND

RELIGIOUS

OF THE

STATE OF MADHIAH INDIA;

DEDUCED FROM AUTHENTIC MANUSCRIPTS

AND

REGULAR ENQUIRIES.

THE HISTORY OF THE CASTE PEOPLE—THEIR ORNAMENTS—
RELIGIOUS AND FUNERAL PROCESSIONS, &c.

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BOOK I.

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BOOK I.—CHAP. I.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS ON THE FOUR PRINCIPAL HINDOO CASTES.

The accounts contained in the Sacred writings of the Hindoos, touching the origin and history of castes, are nothing more than the offspring of a wild and unguided imagination. However, as the professed object of this work is to introduce Europeans to a closer acquaintance with the Hindoos by particularizing the customs and religious ceremonies of this interesting people, and their classification and distribution into castes, we shall not therefore allude to any part of their fabulous history, the extravagance of which is less grateful to a cultivated taste than the legends of any other nation.

The Hindoos are divided into four principal castes—I. Brahman, II. Schatriya, III. Vysia, IV. Soodra. The Brahmin proceeded from the mouth of the Creator, the seat of wisdom; therefore is he infinitely superior in worth and dignity to all other human beings: he regards himself as the most highly favored and chosen of God,* created for the express purpose of ministering in holy things. His duties are to read the Vedas; to teach them to the young Brahmins; and to perform *poojas* and other religious rites. The next in dignity and rank to the Brahmin, the Schatriya, proceeded from the arm of the Creator; therefore is it his peculiar duty, to bear arms in defence of religion, the laws and the institutions of his country. The Schatriyas are an object of unbounded respect to all but the Brahmins: they alone are eligible to Sovereign dignity, and exclusively to enjoy all military honors and rewards. The Vysia, the third caste, proceeded from the thigh of Brahma; they tend cattle, cultivate the soil, and carry on mercantile. The fourth and last class, the Soodra,

proceeded from the foot of the Creator, therefore are they degraded to a life of servitude: they are emphatically called the impure caste.

Such has been the original classification and distribution of the people of India. Time, however, has introduced innovations. The political changes which have so rapidly succeeded each other since the first invasion of India by the house of Gizny down to the entire subjugation of Hindoostan by the British arms, have had no small influence in weakening the deeply rooted, and apparently never-to-be eradicated prejudice of caste; and while the Brahmin of the present day has fallen from the pre-eminent state his tribe once occupied, the Soodras, an object of contempt and even of abhorrence to the other classes of their countrymen, have steadily advanced in knowledge, station and wealth.

Though particular duties were assigned to each of the four castes, and the usurpation or encroachment of an inferior on the privileges of a superior caste most jealously guarded, yet where the interests of the higher castes required, a latitude was given to them which we shall now proceed to notice.

A Brahmin, says the Indian Lawgiver, unable to subsist by his duties, may live by the duty of a soldier; if he cannot get a subsistence by either of these employments, he may apply to tillage and attendance on cattle, or gain a competence by traffic, avoiding certain commodities. A Schatriya, in distress, may subsist by all these means, but he must not have recourse to the highest functions. In seasons of distress, a further latitude is given; the practice of medicine and other learned professions, painting and other arts, work for wages, menial service, alms, and usury, are among the modes of subsistence allowed both to the Brahmin and Schatriya. A Vysia, unable to subsist by his own duties, may descend to the servile acts of a Soodra: and a Soodra, not finding employment by waiting on men of the higher classes, may subsist by handicrafts; principally following these mechanical occupations, as joinery and masonry; and practical arts, as painting and writing; by following which, he may serve men of superior classes: and although a man of a lower class is in general restricted from the acts of a higher class, the Soodra is expressly permitted to become a trader or a husbandman.

Besides the particular occupations assigned to each of the mixed classes, they have the alternative of following that profession which regularly belongs to the class from which they derive their origin on the mother's side: those, at least, have such an option, who are born in the direct order of the classes. The mixed classes are also permitted to subsist by any of the duties of a Soodra; that is, by menial service, by handicrafts, by commerce, or by agriculture.

Hence it appears, that almost every occupation, though regularly it be the profession of a particular class, is open to most other classes; and, that the limitations, far from being rigorous, do in fact reserve only one peculiar profession—that of the Brahmin, which consists in teaching the Vêda, and officiating at religious ceremonies.

* "From his high birth alone, a Brahmin is an object of veneration even to deities; his declarations to mankind are decisive evidence; and the Veda itself confers on him that character."

"Since the Brahmin sprang from the most excellent part, since he was the first born, and since he possesses the Veda, he is by right the chief of this whole creation. Hence, the Being, who exists of himself, produced from the beginning from his own mouth, that having performed holy rites, he might present clarified butter to the Gods, and cakes of rice to the progenitors of mankind, for the preservation of this world:

"What created being then can surpass him, with whose mouth the gods of the firmament continually feast on clarified butter, and the manes of Ancestors, on hallowed cakes?"

"Of created things, the most excellent are those which are animated, of the animated, those which subsist by intelligence; of the intelligent, mankind; and of men, the sacerdotal class.

"Of Priests, those ancient in learning; of the learned, those who know their duty; of those who know it, such as those who perform it virtuously; and of the virtuous, those who seek beatitude from a perfect acquaintance with scriptural doctrine.

"The very birth of Brahmins is a constant incarnation of Dharma, God of Justice; for the Brahmin is born to promote justice, and to procure ultimate happiness.

"When a Brahmin springs to light, he is borne above the world, the chief of all creatures, assigned to guard the treasury of duties, religious and civil.

"Whatever exists in the universe, is all in effect, though not in form, the wealth of the Brahmin; since the Brahmin is entitled to it all by his primogeniture and eminence of birth."

CHAPTER II.

THE ORIGIN AND HISTORY OF THE ADWYDOM OR SMARTAH BRAMINS.

Hindoo Divisions of Hindoostan.

Baradagundum or Hindoostan, was, according to ancient Hindoo geographers, divided into two sections, viz. North and South Hindoostan. North Hindoostan comprehended the whole of the countries commencing from the range of the *Himalaya* mountains to the banks of the *Nurbudda River*, and south Hindoostan from *Nurbudda* to *Cape Comorin*, or *Cunnya Komarie*, including the island of Ceylon. North Hindoostan was inhabited by a division of the *Brahma Caste*, called *Panjacowdar*, and the southern portion by another division called *Panjadraradul*. These two grand divisions of the *Brahmins* are split into three principal tribes, viz.—1st. *Adwydom*, 2d. *Visistadwydom*, and 3d. *Dwydom*.

I.—*Adwydom*. This tribe are now called *Smartah* and hold the highest rank among the priestly orders having gained an ascendancy, by their own account, over the other sect, about 4936 years ago.

II.—*Visistadwydom*, or commonly called *Vishoora-sect*, was founded 837 years ago, (or A. D. 999.) The *Vishoovas* claim the privilege of being classed next in rank to the *Smartahs*.

III.—*Dwydom*, or commonly called *Mautoorah Brahmin*, are the third tribe, and were established 650 years ago, or A. D. 1186.

From the forementioned three principal tribes, other sects to the number of forty-one have been formed.

1. <i>Videkel</i> <i>Brahmins</i> .	19. <i>Desasten</i> <i>Brahmins</i> .
2. <i>Dravedah</i> do.	20. <i>Kurnautakah</i> do.
3. <i>Dravedah Fada-</i>	21. <i>Peopawry</i> . . . do.
<i>maul</i> do.	22. <i>Numboory</i> do.
4. <i>Dravedah Cho-</i>	23. <i>Dracedah Vish-</i>
<i>ladasa</i> do.	<i>noora</i> do.
5. <i>Drovedah Va-</i>	24. <i>Aundra</i> do..... do.
<i>dadasa</i> do.	25. <i>Goviuda</i> do.
6. <i>Utchukacherar</i> . do.	26. <i>Muchodasastaul</i> do.
7. <i>Auriarathar</i> do.	27. <i>Hundoostanee</i> ... do.
8. <i>Mauthemon</i> do.	28. <i>Jayaineah</i> do.
9. <i>Cannyar</i> do.	29. <i>Sonyean</i> do.
10. <i>Mooekanyer</i> do.	30. <i>Vauthemon</i> do.
11. <i>Saryar</i> do.	31. <i>Sunkutee</i> do.
12. <i>Paradamavank-</i>	32. <i>Gonyarauthy</i> ... do.
<i>hy</i> do.	33. <i>Numbyar</i> do.
13. <i>Teloonger, or</i>	34. <i>Trypurnirah</i> do.
<i>Vientoo</i> do.	35. <i>Aupthumbyar</i> ... do.
14. <i>Teloogaunyum</i> .. do.	36. <i>Kaatheyoyahnautdo</i> .
15. <i>Felmautyrauroo</i> do.	37. <i>Bonthanyenaut</i> . do.
16. <i>Moorkieenauty-</i>	38. <i>Auryar</i> do.
<i>rauroo</i> do.	39. <i>Puthethaul</i> do.
17. <i>Neyoghee</i> do.	40. <i>Linggul</i> do.
18. <i>Surauthoyer</i> do.	41. <i>Kanyjee</i> do!

All these sects differ considerably from each other in their manners, customs, and religious doctrines. Their origin and history shall be submitted in future numbers of this work. The present portion will occupy the history of the *Smartah Brahmins*, being the first on the list of the three principal tribes of the Hindoo sacerdotal order.

The nomenclature *Smartah* is derived from a ceremony performed by them called *Smurtee* a most holy covenant made with the Creator in the names of the Indian *Triad*, *Brahma*, *Vishnoo*, and *Siva*.

The *Smartahs* acknowledge the divinity of *Brahma*, *Vishnoo*, and *Siva*, whom they adore, but chiefly offer up prayers, to *Adibhagwaan*, or the only Eternal God. They represent *Brahma* with four heads, but assert he lost one of them, by *Siva's*

means, in order to punish his pride. Hence, that they have no more than three books of their *Vedam*, or scriptures, the first which treated of God being lost; the second treats of the government of the world; the third of morality and virtue; the fourth of the rites and ceremonies performed in their temples and at their sacrifices. The four books of the *Vedam*, are by them called, *Rogyo Vedam*; *Jadwa Vedam*; *Sama Vedam*; and *Tarawana Vedam*.

The *Brahmins* assert, that under inspiration their holy men have laid down certain rules for performing certain rites which they strictly observe.* The rites and ceremonies enjoined are

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|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. <i>Jathacurram.</i> | 9. <i>Auganaveradam.</i> |
| 2. <i>Naurmacurram.</i> | 10. <i>Visoovadaradam.</i> |
| 3. <i>Annaprasanam.</i> | 11. <i>Shournehoveradam.</i> |
| 4. <i>Shoulam.</i> | 12. <i>Gohdanam.</i> |
| 5. <i>Hoobanahenam.</i> | 13. <i>Veragam.</i> |
| 6. <i>Hoobacurram.</i> | 14. <i>Neshagam.</i> |
| 7. <i>Vathatheyanam.</i> | 15. <i>Nobanam.</i> |
| 8. <i>Perasaupatheum.</i> | 16. <i>Semadam.</i> |

Jathacurram, or rites performed at the birth of a child.—

Before the umbilical cord of the new-born infant is separated from the navel, immersion must be performed by the father. The act of purification having been gone through, change of dry linen substituted and the marks on the forehead laid on, the father announces the birth of the child to all his relatives and friends, but particularly to the *Shastres*, or *Astrologers*. All the parties present being assembled they offer up prayers, not only for the safe delivery of the child, but also for its future prosperity and longevity, and having previously taken a memorandum of the precise time of its birth, after offering paddy, as a sacrifice to *Adibagawan*, the father produces the paper with the memorandum to the *Brahmins* in attendance, who immediately

* In the Institutes of Menu there are five sacraments enjoined to be performed daily: they are thus described—1. Teaching and studying the scriptures is the sacrament of the *veda*—2. Offering cakes and water, the sacrament of the manes—3. An oblation to fire, the sacrament of the deities—4. Giving rice or other food to living creatures, the sacrament of spirits—5. Receiving guests with honor, the sacrament of Men. Previous to the performance of these sacraments the *Brahmin* must have gone through his morning devotions, which are thus described by Colchbrook, and but considerably abridged by the celebrated Mill, the historian of India.

DAILY CEREMONIES OF THE BRAHMINS.

As he rises from sleep, a *Brahmin* must rub his teeth with a proper withe, or a twig of the *rachnefetous* fig tree, repeating prayers. Should this sacred duty be omitted, an great sin is incurred, that the benefit is lost of all religious rites performed by him. The next circumstance of importance is, the deposit of the withe after it has done its office. It must be carefully thrown away in a place free from impurities; that is, where none of those religious stains, which are so multiplied among the *Hindus*, and most infect so many places, have been imprinted. When the business of the teeth and of the twig is accomplished, ablution next engages the attention of the *Brahmin*. The duty of the bath, particularly in the months of *Magha*, *Phalgina*, and *Cartica*, is no less efficacious than a rigid penance for the expiation of sin. Standing in a river, or in other water, the worshipper, sipping water, which is a requisite preliminary to all rites, and sprinkling it before him, recites inaudibly the *gayatri*, or holiest text of the *veda*, with the names of the seven worlds. He next throws water eight times on his head, or towards the sky, and at last upon the ground, to destroy the demons who wage war with the gods, reciting prayers, of which the first may be received as a specimen: "Oh waters, since ye afford us delight, grant us present happiness, and the rapturous sight of the supreme god." When these ceremonies and prayers are performed, he plunges three times into the water, and each time repeats the expiatory text which recites the creation, and having then washed his mantle, the morning ablution is finished. If he is an householder, it is his duty to bathe again at noon, and if he belongs to an order of devotion, both at noon and in the evening, with ceremonies, differing somewhat in the words and forms, but the same in spirit and substance.



BRĀMA CASTE
Smartah Sect.
Book I. Platel.

E.A. Rodrigues, del.

Madras 1837.

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calculate the Nativity of the child, which being completed, the fate of the infant is then foretold. This done, the assembly proceed to one of the apartments in the house where the father distributes a quantity of new paddy to all present,—should the father be in good circumstances, he also adds sweetmeats, sugar, sugar-candy, beetle-nut, flowers, and a few pieces of coin to each of the Brahmins. When all the guests are served, the babe is brought out, for the purpose of cutting the umbilical cord at which time the Brahmins pronounce a blessing on the child and retire.

An important part of the worship of the Brahmin then succeeds. Coming out of the water, and putting on his mantle, he sits down to worship the rising sun. This great duty is performed by first tying the lock of hair on the crown of his head, while he holds much *çusa* grass in his left hand, and three blades of it in his right, or wears a ring of it on the third finger of that hand, reciting at the same time the *gayatri*. He then sips water three times, repeats the mysterious names of the seven worlds, recites again the *gayatri*, rubs his hands as if washing them, touches with his wet hand his feet, head, breast, eyes, ears, nose and navel, and again three times sips water. If, however, he should sneeze, or spit, he must obey the text which says, "after sneezing, spitting, blowing his nose, sleeping, putting on apparel or dropping tears, a man should not immediately sip water, but first touch his right ear." The sipping, however, being at last performed, he passes his hand filled with water, briskly round his neck, while he prays: "may the waters preserve me!" He then shuts his eyes and meditates in silence. Till we get better information, very wonderful ideas were formed of the sublimity of the Brahmins' meditations. On this, one of the most sacred and solemn of all occasions, while he meditates in silence, with his eyes shut, and every mark of intense thought, we are informed, that he is only "figuring to himself, that Brahma, with five faces and a red complexion, resides in his navel; Vishnu, with four arms and a black complexion, in his heart; and Siva, with five faces and a white complexion, in his forehead." Nor is this the whole of his meditation—He ponders next on the holiest of texts; and this sublime duty is performed in the following manner. Closing the left nostril with the two longest fingers of the right hand, he draws his breath through the right nostril, and then closing it with his thumb, and suspending his breath, he repeats to himself the *gayatri*, the mysterious names of the worlds, and the sacred text of Brahma; after which, raising his fingers from the left nostril, he emits the breath which he had suppressed, and thus ends one part of his meditations.

The same process is repeated three times and the whole is then concluded. This meditation, says Yajnyawalkya, "implies, Om, (aum,) earth, sky, heaven, middle region, place of births, mansion of the blessed, abode of truth. We meditate on the adorable light of the resplendent generator which governs our intellects, which is water, lustre, savon, immortal faculty of thought, Brahma, earth, sky, and heaven." He then stands on one foot, resting the other against his ankle or heel, and looking towards the east, while his hands are held open before him in a hollow form, and in that posture he recites prayers to the sun, of which the following is one of the most remarkable: "Thou art self-existent, thou art the most excellent ray; thou givest effulgence, grant it unto me." When all these ceremonies are performed, the oblation or offering is the next part of the service. It consists of tila, flowers, barley, water, and red sanders-wood; it is put into a vessel of copper in the shape of a boat, and placed on the head of the votary, who presents it with fresh prayers, and holy texts. In the last place comes the invocation of the *gayatri*. It is first addressed in these words: "Thou art light; thou art seed; thou art immortal life; thou art effulgent; beloved by the gods, defamed by none, thou art the holiest sacrifice." It is then recited measure by measure; next the two first measures are recited as one hemistich; and the third measure as the other; lastly, the three measures are repeated without interruption. It is addressed again in the following words: "Divine text, who dost grant our best wishes, whose name is trisyllable, whose import is the power of the Supreme Being; come, thou mother of the Vedas, who didst spring from Brahma, be constant here." It is then, along with the trilateral monosyllable, and the names of the three lower worlds, pronounced inaudibly a hundred, or a thousand times, or as often as practicable, while the repetitions are counted upon a rosary of wild grains, or of gems set in gold. Additional prayers are recited, and the morning worship of the sun is thus terminated.

The religious duties which fill up the remaining portion of the day are chiefly comprized in what are denominated the five sacraments. I shall endeavour by a very short illustration to convey an idea of each.

Preparatory to the study of the Veda must ablation be performed. Of this some ceremonies not yet described may be here introduced. "Let a Brahmin at all times perform the ablation," says the law of Menu, "with the pure part of his hand, denominated from the Veda, or with the part sacred to the Lord of creatures, or with that dedicated to the gods; but never with the part named from the *Pitris*." The pure part under the root of the thumb is called Brahma; that at the root of the little finger, *Caya*; that at the tips of the fingers, *Datta*; and that the part between the thumb and index, *Pitrya*. Let him first sip water thrice; then twice wipe his eyes, and lastly touch with water the six hollow parts of his head, [or his eyes, ears, and nostrils,] his breast and his head. He who knows the law, and seeks purity, will ever perform the ablation with the pure part of his hand, and with water neither hot nor frothy, standing in a lonely place, and turning to the east or the north. A Brahmin is purified by water that reaches his bosom; a *Çhatryia*, by water descending to his throat; a *Vaisya*, by water barely taken into his mouth; a *Sudra*, by water touched with the extremity of his lips." Having concluded this part of the ceremony, and walked in a circle beginning from the south, he proceeds to the pronunciation of the syllable *Aum*. "A Brahmin, beginning and ending a lecture on the Veda, must always pronounce to himself the syllable *Aum*; for unless the syllable *Aum* precedes, his learning will slip away from him; and unless it follow, nothing will be long retained. If he have sitted on culms of *çusa* grass, with their points toward the east, and be purified by rubbing that holy grass on both his hands, and be further prepared by three suppressions of breath, each equal in time to five short vowels, he may then fitly pronounce *Aum*. Brahma milked out, as it were, from the three vedas, the letter A, the letter U, and the letter M, which form by their coalition the trilateral monosyllable, together with three

Naumacurmam, or giving the child a name.—Eleven days after the birth of the child, the mother and her infant having bathed and the house purified, with a smearing of cow-dung, the father, accompanied with music performs the ceremony of *Poonneyatasaram*, or alms-giving to as many Brahmins as circumstances will permit. The relatives and friends being assembled, the Brahmins offer up their prayers, and worship the nine principal planets, which they call *Navagragan*, the names of these planets in English are the following, viz. Sun, Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupi-

mysterious words, earth, sky, heaven." Turning his face towards the east, with his right hand towards the south, and his left hand towards the north, he then sits down, having the *çusa* grass before him, holding two blades of it on the tips of his left fingers, and placing on them his right hand with the palm turned upwards, and in this sacred position he meditates the *gayatri*. He then recites the due prayers and texts, and is thus prepared to begin the daily perusal of the Veda.

The sacrament of the manes, which occupies the second place in the above text of Menu, is described at great length in that sacred volume. "Let the Brahmin smear with cow-dung a purified and sequestered piece of ground; and let him with great care select a place with a declivity toward the south. Having duly made an ablation with water, let him place with reverence the invited Brahmins, who have also performed their ablutions, one by one, on allotted seats purified with *çusa* grass, honouring them with fragrant garlands and sweet odours, and bringing for them water, with *çusa* grass and tila; then let him pour the oblation of clarified butter on the holy fire, and afterwards proceed to satisfy the manes of his ancestors. Having walked in order from east to south, and thrown into the fire all the ingredients of his oblation, let him sprinkle water on the ground with his right hand. From the remainder of the clarified butter having formed three balls of rice, let him offer them, with fixed attention, in the same manner as the water, his face being turned to the south; then, having offered those balls, after due ceremonies, and with an attentive mind, to the manes of his father, his paternal grandfather, and great grandfather, let him wipe the same hand with the roots of *çusa*, which he had before used, for the sake of his paternal ancestors in the fourth, fifth, and sixth degrees, who are the partakers of the rice and clarified butter thus wiped off. Having made an ablation, returning toward the north, and thrice suppressing his breath slowly, let him salute the gods of the six seasons, and the *Pitris*. Whatever water remains in his ewer, let him carry back deliberately near the cakes of rice; and with fixed attention let him smell those cakes, in order as they were offered, and give part of them to the Brahmins. Having poured water, with *çusa* grass and tila, into the hands of the Brahmins, let him give them the upper part of the cakes, saying Swadha to the manes. Next, having himself brought with both hands a vessel full of rice, let him, still meditating on the *Pitris*, place it before the Brahmins without precipitation. Broths, potherbs, and other eatables accompanying the rice, together with milk and curds, clarified butter and honey, let him first place on the ground after he has made an ablation; let him add spiced puddings and milky messes of various sorts, roots of herbs and ripe fruits, savoury meats and sweet-smelling drinks: then being duly purified, and with perfect presence of mind, let him take up all the dishes one by one, and present them in order to the Brahmins, proclaiming their qualities. Himself being delighted, let him give delight to the Brahmins, and invite them to eat of the provisions by little and little; attracting them often with the dressed rice and other eatables. Let all the dressed food be very hot. Let not a chandala, a town boar, a cock, a dog, or an eunuch, see the Brahmins eating." These, with a variety of prayers, and several other observances, are the obsequies to the manes of ancestors.

The oblations to fire, which are a most important part of the duties of the Hindu, are dignified with the title of the sacrament of the gods. I shall here premise the ceremonies attending the consecration of the fire, and the sacramental implements, though to all religious rites these may be regarded as introductory. In order to prepare the ground for the reception of the holy fire, the priest chooses a level spot four cubits square, free from all ceremonial impurities, covered with a shed, and this he smears with cow-dung. Next, having bathed and sipped water, he sits down with his face towards the east, and placing a vessel of water with *çusa* grass on his left, dropping his right knee, and resting on the span of his left hand, he draws, after an established rule, five consecrated lines, and gathering up the dust from the edges of them, throws it away toward the north-east, saying, "What was herein had is thrown away." Having, also, sprinkled the lines with water, and the ground being now prepared, he takes a lighted ember out of the vessels wherein he preserves the fire, and throwing it away, cries, "I dismiss far away ramiferous fire: May it go to the realm of Vama, bearing sin hence." Then, placing the fire before him, he exclaims, "Earth! sky! heaven!" and adds, "This other harmless fire only remains here: well knowing its office, may it convey my oblation to the gods." He now bestows upon it a name, conformable to the purpose for which he prefers it, and concludes this part of the ceremony by silently burning a log of wood one span long, smeared with clarified butter. The placing of the superintending priest is the next part of the duty. On very solemn occasions this is a real Brahmin; but in general a substitute is made for him of a bundle of *çusa* grass. He by whom the sacrifice is performed takes up the vessel of water, and keeping his right side towards the fire, walks round it; then he pours water near it, in an eastern direction, and spreads on it *çusa* grass; then he crosses, without sitting down, his right knee over his left; then takes up a single blade of grass between the thumb and ring finger of his left hand; next throws it away towards the south-west, saying, "What was herein had is cast away;" then he touches the water, resting the sole of his right foot on his left ankle, sprinkles the grass with water, after which he places on it his Brahmin made of *çusa*, saying to it, "Sit on this seat until thy fee be paid thee;" he then returns round the fire the same way by which he went, and sitting down again, with his face towards the east, names the earth inaudibly. If no profane word should hitherto have been spoken, for which atonement is requisite, he must next spread leaves of *çusa* grass on three sides of the fire; he begins with the eastern side, and lays three rows of leaves in such a manner that the tip of the one shall cover the root of the other;

ter, Venus, Saturn, Rawho (1) and Cathoo (2):—after which paddy is cast on the floor of the house, and the principal Brahmin or priest, writes the name of the infant, on the ground, with a piece of gold, or gold-rod, and then proclaims the name of the child aloud; this done he pronounces a benediction on the infant, and the whole company then adjourn to dinner—after which the father of the child serves out cloths and money to the Brahmins.

Annoprasanam, or ceremony observed when an infant is for the first time fed by the mother or any of her relatives.—On the sixth month, or any time before the anniversary of the child's birth—the parents invite all their connexions and friends, as also the family priests: all being assembled, they sing sacred songs accompanied with music, and repeat short texts, entreating *Abidhagan* to prosper the child. The father pours into the mouth of the infant a little *conjee*, or rice boiled with milk and the ceremonies finish with a dinner—the Brahmins receiving their customary presents of cloths, &c.

On the sixth or seventh month after the birth of the child, a festival is celebrated similar to the foregoing. The horoscope, being consulted the child's ears are bored with a gold wire, by the *Thuttan*, or jeweller, who receives a pair of cloths, fruit and money—and the Brahmins who may be present, their customary alms.

Varooshavarithe, or anniversary of the child's birth, is celebrated with great pomp and expense, with music and songs. Fervent prayers are offered up to God, and to the Planet under

after this he blesses the ten regions of space, and rising a little puts some wood on the fire with a ladleful of clarified butter, while he meditates in silence on Brahma, the lord of creatures: next he takes up two leaves of the grass, and with another cutting off the length of a span, and saying, "Pure leaves be sacred to Vishnu," he throws them into a vessel of copper, or other metal; he then takes up other two leaves, and holding the tips of them between the thumb and ring finger of his right hand, the roots between the thumb and ring finger of his left he takes up, having the one hand crossed over the other, clarified butter in the curvature of the leaves, and throws some of it three several times into the fire. He then sprinkles the leaves with water, and throws them away; next, having sprinkled the vessel containing the clarified butter, he puts it on the fire and takes it off again three several times, when, having recited the proper prayers with cusa grass in both his hands, the ceremony of hallowing the butter is finished. That of hallowing the wooden ladle is performed by describing three times with the tip of his forefinger and thumb the figure 7 on the inside of it, and the figure 9 on the outside, by sprinkling water, having first dropped on one knee, from the palms of his hands, on the whole southern side of the fire, from west to east, on the western side from south to north, on the northern side, and then all around the fire, reciting prayers and sacred texts. Having next recited an expiatory prayer with cusa grass in both his hands, and having thrown the grass away, he has then finished the consecration of the sacrificial implements. It is only after all this is accomplished that he is prepared to begin the oblation to fire, of which the following is one of that variety of forms which it receives according to the rite intended to succeed. First, the priest hurls silently a bag of rice, an eel, and clarified butter; next, he makes three oblations, by pouring each time a ladleful of clarified butter on the fire, and pronouncing severally the following prayers: "Earth! be this oblation efficacious,"—"Sky! be this oblation efficacious,"—"Heaven! be this oblation efficacious." On some occasions the oblation is made a fourth time, and he says, "Earth! Sky! Heaven! be this oblation efficacious." An offering of rice, milk, curds, and butter, is next performed, and the oblations accompanied with the names of the three worlds are repeated. "In his domestic fire, for dressing the food of all the gods," says the law of Menu, "let a Brahmin make an oblation each day to these following deities: first to Agni, god of fire, and to the lunar god severally; then, to both of them at once; next, to the assembled gods; and afterwards to Divasvanti, god of sunshine, to Cibu, goddess of the day, when the new moon is discernible; to Anamiti, goddess of the day after the application; to Prapatti, or the lord of creatures; to Drava and Prithivi, goddesses of sky and earth; and lastly, to the fire of the god sacrifices." Having thus, with fixed attention, offered clarified butter in all quarters, proceeding from the east in a southern direction, to Indra, Yama, Varuna, and the god Soma, let him offer his gift to animal creatures."

The fourth sacrament, or that of spirits, in the institutes of Menu, is thus described: "Let him, saying, I salute the maras or winds, throw dressed rice near the fire, saying, I salute the water-gods, let him throw it in water; and let him throw it on his postle and mortar, saying, I salute the gods of large trees. Let him be the like in the north-east, or near his pillow, to Sri, the goddess of abundance; in the south-west, or at the feet of his bed, to the presiding goddess Bhuvanali; in the center of his mansion, to Brahma, and his household-gods; to all the gods assembled, let him throw up his oblation in open air by day to the spirits who walk in light; and by night, to those who walk in darkness; in the halling on his mansion, or behind his back, let him cast his oblation for the welfare of all creatures; and what remains let him give to the Pites with his face toward the south."

Of these domestic sacraments, which constitute in great a part of the duty of the Hindus, receiving guests with honor, which is denominated the sacrament of man, is the fifth. This is done, by English writers, interpreted "in up-tality." But we shall form a very erroneous opinion of this sacramental service, if we confound it with the merely human and profane duty of receiving strangers benevolently from motives of humanity. This is a duty purely religious, contained

the influence of which the child was born. The Brahmins partake as usual the dinner prepared on such occasions, and receive the presents distributed.

Shoulam, is a ceremony performed on shaving the head of the child for the first time. In the 3d or 5th year, some lucky day is chosen. The parents assemble their friends together and under the directions of a Brahmin the fortunate moment is seized to perform the ceremony of *Palegny*. They place five earthen flower-pots filled with sand, in each of which seeds* are sown which had been previously soaked in milk, should the seeds shoot up well, it is considered a good omen—whereupon the barber in attendance, shaves the head of the child, and smears it with ground sandal-wood. It is customary to give the barber presents of cloths, fruit, money, &c.: he is also allowed to take the silver or copper vessel which contained the water used in performing the operation of shaving. In celebrating this festival a number of children of the *Brahmin* caste alone, are invited, who partake of a dinner, and receive nose-gays, etcetera.

Hooba-ahanam, is a ceremony performed before wearing the *Poonool*, or *Brahminical thread*.—The ceremony preparatory to wearing the *Poonool* takes place between the seventh and twelfth year of the lad's age and in the month of April or May. The lad being taught the rudiments of learning, some lucky day is chosen. At the appointed time, the friends, relatives, and the officiating Brahmins attend. Prayers are then offered up to *Nande*, or the household god,

to the twice-born & consecrated classes; and principally entreated for the benefit of the Brahmins; that for the rest, and on all occasions, every door may be open, and every table spread. "A Brahmin, coming as a guest, and not received with just honor, takes to himself all the reward of the housekeeper's former virtue, even though he had been so temperate as to live on the gleanings of harvests, and so pious as to make obligations in five distinct fires." A guest, in the Hindu sense, is not every man who may claim, or may stand in need of your hospitality: A guest according to the commentators, whom Mr. Colebrooke follows as his guide, is "a spiritual preceptor, a priest, an ascetic, a prince, a bridegroom, a friend." "In the house of a Brahmin," says the law of Menu, "anitary man is not denominated a guest; nor a man of the commercial or servile cast;" so that a Brahmin, to whom are devoted the hospitalities of all the classes, is bound to return them to Brahmins alone. Among the religious ceremonies with which this sacrament is celebrated, a cow is tied on the northern side of the apartment, and a stool and other furniture placed for the guest, when the householder, rising up to bid him welcome, recites the prayer, "May she, who supplies obligations for religious worship, who constantly fallow her calf, and who was the milch cow when Yama was the viceroy, abound with milk, and fulfill our wishes year after year." The guest then sits down on the stool or cushion prepared for him, reciting the text of the *Yajurved*, which says, "I step on this for the sake of food and other benefits, on this costly & delectable foot-stool." His host next presents to him a cushion made of twenty leaves of cusa grass, holding it up with both hands, and exclaiming, "The cushion! the cushion! the cushion!" which the guest accepts and places it on the ground under his feet, reciting prayers. This done, a vessel of water is presented to him, the host thrice exclaiming, "Water for ablutions." If this the guest declines his acceptance, and looking into the vessel cries, "Generous water! I view thee, return in the form of fertilizing rain from him from whom thou hast proceed." He then takes some of it in the palms of both hands joined together, and throws it on his left foot, saying, "I wash my left foot, and fix prosperity in this realm." In the same manner on the right foot, with a similar declaration; and lastly, on both feet, saying, "I wash first one and then the other, and lastly, both feet that the realm may thrive, and intrepidity be gained." With similar formalities is next presented an *Archee*, an *arghya*; that is, a vessel shaped like a boat, or a conch, filled with water, rice, and *darva* grass, when the guest pouring the water on his head, says, "Thou art the splendor of food, through thee may I become glorious." The host, again presenting water, three times exclaims, "Take water to be acceptable!" the guest, accepting it, says, "Thou art glorious, grant me glory!" The ceremonies being finished, the host fills a vessel with honey, curds, and clarified butter, and, covering it with another vessel, presents it to his guest, exclaiming three times, "Take the *Mulhaparica*." He, receiving, places it on the ground, and looking into it, says, "Thou art glorious, may I become so." He tastes it three times, saying, "Thou art the sustenance of the glorious, thou art the nourishment of the splendid; thou art the food of the fortunate; grant me prosperity; and then silently eats until he be satisfied. When this is done, he sips water; and touching him with and other parts of his body with his hand, he says, "May there be speech in my mouth; breath in my nostrils; sight in my eye-balls, hearing in my ears, strength in my arms, firmness in my thighs; may my limbs and members remain united together with my soul." Presents are then presented to him, suitable to the rank of the parties; and a barber who attends for the purpose, now exclaims, "The cow, the cow." The guest then pronounces the following text: "Release the cow from the fetters of Varuna, may she subdue my foe. May she destroy the enemies both of my host and me. I miss the cow that she may eat grass and drink water." At this intercession she is released, and the guest addresses her, "I have earnestly entreated this prudent person, saying, Kill not this innocent, harmless cow, who is a mother of *Rubra*, daughter of *Vamsa*, sister of *Vityas* and the source of *Ambrisa*." Such is the mode in which the ceremonial duty of entertaining guests is celebrated, and such is an idea of the ceremonies which are included in the five daily sacraments of the Hindus.

(1) Ascending Node. (2) Descending Node.

* Paddy, Bapeseeds, Mustard, Green-gram, and Ooloondoo.



BRAMA CASTE

Scotch Scot

E.A. Sequeira del.

Madras 1837



and to the manes of departed relatives to whose memory offerings are made; the whole rite concluding by the father placing the Poonool across the breast of the lad over the left shoulder.

• *Hoobacurmam*.—This festival is observed by the Brahmins on the day when the moon is in Shravan.* This is a remarkable season. The period when every young Brahmin must enter on the study of his Vedams—or scriptures. The young unmarried Brahmins have their heads shaved, and all who wear the *Brahminical thread*, bathe in tanks or rivers and there throw off their old strings and put on new ones. This is also a day of penance, for the sins committed during the course of the year.

7. *Vathatheyanam*, is a ceremony observed preparatory to the young Brahmins being taught their most sacred and mystical prayers.

8. *Perasarpatheum*, a sacrifice offered to *Brahma*, by the Brahminy lad after *Poonool* marriage.

9. *Auganaveradan*.

10. *Visoovadaravadam* and

11. *Skoemehaveradam*, are ceremonies performed when the young Brahmins are instructed by their fathers privately in certain rites and ceremonies of their Pagodas; as also the mode of performing Poojahs.

12. *Gohdanam*, is a ceremony observed, when the whole body of a young Brahmin is shaved. *This custom among Smartah Brahmins, is now on the decline.*

The 13th ceremony is *Vevagam*, or Matrimony.

It is here necessary to state, that there are no less than eight kinds or forms of marriage among the Brahmins, and other castes that are sanctioned by the Hindoo religion. They are extremely trivial and tiresome, abounding in grossness without a parallel, perhaps, among any other nation: they offend against purity, morals and common sense. But this is a digression. The marriage ceremonies sanctioned by the Hindoo law are as follow.

1st. *Beraumetvevagam*, matrimony solemnized, when the father of a young woman defrays all the expenses of the wedding, consequent on the indigence of the man.

2d. *Dehivomvevagam*, or religious marriage, of rare occurrence, and only allowed to a Brahmin, so learned, pious and holy, as to be able effectually, to perform the most sacred and mystical ceremony of the *Eggion-onimom* and *Fagum*, the efficacy of which, is so powerful, as to secure the salvation of the souls of a whole family, on whose behalf it was undertaken, in remuneration for which, the head of such family voluntarily gives up the most comely of his daughters in marriage to the learned and pious Brahmin who incurs not the smallest expense himself. With the possession of his bride, the bridegroom also receives money as a marriage portion.

3d. *Aroosum-vevagam*, is another marriage, allowed when the bridegroom is very poor, and ashamed to raise contribution for this purpose: he therefore endeavours to procure two cows, and gives them in barter for a wife—who follows him to his house, where, in the presence of his relatives, he ties the *talli* or marriage knot, with his own hands.

4th. *Candooroo-vevagam*, or the union of two persons as man and wife, without the sanction of their respective families—a *talli* is not used on this occasion.

5th. *Asoorum-vevagam*, or purchasing a wife. A needy Brahmin having a comely daughter, announces, that for a consideration, of more or less value depending on circumstances, any one of his opulent neighbours, of his own sect, may on paying the amount demanded, marry his daughter.

6th. *Ratchasam-vevagam*, are ceremonies performed when a man forcibly removes the woman he loves from her parents or guardians and marries her.

7th. *Pasavsam-vevagam*. This ceremony requires a brief explanation. The Hindoos being composed of undivided families, prefer, that, their relatives should marry within the family limits. But it sometimes happens, that the head of the family is inclined to favour a stranger, and thereby deprive a young

man of his claim to the hand of his female relative—On such an occasion it generally happens, that the discarded suitor, unknown to the family, brings in a *talli* and ties the same to the neck of his intended bride, whereupon taking flight, he proclaims his nuptials in the highways and streets and absconds till formally invited to receive his wife. The *talli*, once tied round the neck of a woman, must never be removed before the death of the husband. If the *talli*, during the life time of the man who tied it, be removed, then the woman is considered a widow, and as widows never marry in India, she per force becomes the wife of the man.

Prajapathcom-vevagam is the most common and regular way of solemnizing the rite of matrimony among the Brahmins. The ceremonies are as follow.

As nothing is undertaken in all the transactions of his life without the Hindoo first consulting the family Brahmin, so on this important occasion the father who may have a son and wishes to settle him in life, invites the astrologer by presents and gifts to name a day that would be, in every respect, propitious for embarking on so important and weighty a business. This point satisfactorily settled, the father looks about him among his neighbours and acquaintances for a daughter-in-law suited to the character and expectations of his son. Having found one calculated to answer his expectations, and having given previous notice of his intentions, he proceeds in company with his wife, son, and some mutual friends to the dwelling of the girl.

The good and bad omens* on their journey to the woman's house are jealously observed, and should nothing untoward occur to turn them homewards, they arrive at the place of their destination. Here enquiries are instituted into the pedigree of the family, tribe and sect. These preliminaries being all in favour of the girl, she herself becomes an object of scrutiny. Her person, temper and habits are all subjected to the ordeal of a family into whose bosom she is destined to be received. She must be symmetrical in her form, beautiful in her person, cleanly in her habits, delicate in her taste, elegant in her manners, in a word, the paragon of perfection. Thus satisfied the calculations made at the birth of the girl are demanded and produced. The paper is examined in all its parts, and if the Brahmin who has been retained to examine the important document, discovers that there is a coincidence in the destiny

* The generality of the Hindoos are superstitious above measure; they believe in dreams, and in every thing they undertake, strictly observe certain good and bad omens. The following are considered good omens on a first visit in search of a wife.

A king coming in procession, or from hunting—a bundle of sugar-cane—yellow colored rice—a pot of milk—a pot of tyre—a pot of toddy—a pot of honey,—basket of toasted rice, called *Porry*—white cloths—pearls—fishes—a married man—a maid—two bramins—a marriage procession—music—a man or woman with a basket of flowers—a flame—a traveller with a bundle of raw-rice—a man with a *Tamara*, or lotus flower—or precious stones—an ox—an elephant—a horse—an old pot—a pot of water—a baboon—a deer—a dog—a funeral—beautiful birds, such as parrots, pigeons, dove, &c.,—flesh of animals—a basket of fruits—a wagon with travellers.

The following are considered bad omens if met with in an opposite direction.—A lunatic—a blind man—a cobbler—a lame man—a leper, or any person afflicted with disease—a man anointed with oil previous to bathing—a man in a curious or frightful disguise—an illegitimate son,—a barren woman—a *Sunnaushee*—or religious man—a basket of ashes—a bundle of cotton—a single sheep—mire in the way—salt—husks—a deformed person—two persons fighting on the road—a house on fire—a single Brahmin—three Brahmins—a man or woman with dishevelled hair—a widow—an empty pot—a starved man or woman—a bare headed man—a man carrying firewood—a servant belonging to a pagoda—a Brahmin of the *Siva* religion—a man with a *kajan* book.

Certain omens that are considered *uspicious*, if they happen to come from the left, and cross the party to the right.—A jack-daw, a braminy-kite, a quail, a hart, a hog, a musk-rat, an eagle, a cat, a snake, a rat, a monkey, a dog, an *ichnueraau*, and an owl.

Certain omens that are considered *auspicious*, if they happen contrariwise to the above rule.—A crow, a crane, a jackail, a parrot, a tiger, a hare, a fowl, a sparrow, a peacock, a bloodsucker, a spotted deer or hart, cows, buffaloes, a bullock, a civit cat.

of the young couple, and declares the union will turn out happy to the contracting parties; that the man will be eminent as father, husband, and citizen; that the woman faithful and fruitful, and constant in all the changes and chances of life, then muntrums are said, and the parents of the bride and bridegroom exchange beetle-nut in ratification of the contract entered upon.—The Brahmins after consulting the planets fix the day and hour to erect the wedding pole in the bride's house.

They also decide on the marriage portion and wedding expenses, the value of jewels and cloths to be given to the bride on the wedding day—the amount of money for the expenses of the marriage, and the amount of marriage portion. These points settled, they depart. But the bridegroom is sent for to the house of the bride, a few days after the contract had been ratified, when being washed and shaved all over the body, is presented with cloths.

It must here be observed, that the least marriage portion or dowry, composed of jewels, is never less than twenty-five star pagodas, and those who have not the means to give the bride even that small portion, must raise it by contributions among their friends, and other castes, who never deny to assist one on such occasions. Acts of this kind are considered real charity or *pooniam*.

Marriages among Brahmins and other castes are attended with great expense, especially among the rich, but the poor, must either borrow, or raise contributions.

THE CEREMONIES.

On the fixed day and hour, the nuptial shed is erected in the house of the bride—the marriage pole forming one of the supports of the shed. Before the exchange of the *malla* or garland of flowers between the bride and bridegroom takes place, a very ridiculous ceremony is observed.

The bridegroom, pretending to go on a pilgrimage to the holy river *Ganges*, puts on the usual red cap of a Brahmin, and bearing a cane and a fan in one hand, a book of the *Padam* in the other, with new cloths, large circular earrings pendant about his ears, a small bundle of rice on his shoulder, a double *foanool* or brahminical thread across his breast, and wooden shoes on his feet—leaves the house and walks a short distance, as if on his journey to the holy place. His intended father-in-law, or in whose absence, by death or sickness, the nearest male connexion of the bride, proceeds in company with a few of his family to overtake the pilgrim—being provided with two coconuts, rubbed all over with saffron. As soon as the party approaches the pilgrim, the father-in-law accosts him. "My son, where are you going in these pilgrim's habiliments?" who replies, "Having learnt the particular prayers and ceremonies of my religion from my father, I am now setting out upon this pilgrimage, with a view to forget the pleasures of this world and visit the holy river *Ganges*, for the sake of closer communion with the gods." The father-in-law, answers "My son, why will you lead a life attended with such fatigue and danger. Believe me, I will forthwith sanction your marriage with my daughter; come then, and partake of this felicity, and be a father of many children, and God will bless you with an increase of every worldly comfort." The father-in-law, now presents him with the two coconuts, which signify an engagement that must be fulfilled, and then compels him to return home with him. A band of *tom toms* and trumpets being secreted, a little way off, now set up a *rat-tat-too*, and the whole procession return with great joy. Arrived at the house, the father-in-law places his son-in-law and daughter, on a cradle, in which the young couple exchange garlands of flowers, or *malla*. The bride takes a garland from her neck, and putting it on the bridegroom's neck, says, "I am willing to marry you." The bridegroom returns the compliment. The ceremony thrice performed, the cradle is rocked to and fro for some time. While the cradle is rocking a kind of lullaby is chaunted accompanied with music, by the

family and friends. An hour expired, a female of the bride or bridegroom's family, brings a brass plate, containing water, milk, and saffron, and some raw rice, and a lamp burning in the centre. The contents in the brass plate are turned in a circular manner thrice round the heads of the bride and bridegroom. This is called taking out *Distee* or neutralizing an evil eye. Fire is now kindled in a vessel, and placed in the centre of the nuptial-shed. This is the nuptial fire, *Aggeny*, on which the bridegroom boils a small pot of rice, and after offering it to the memory of the departed dead or *Nandee*, of both families, the bride and bridegroom eat some of it.

The bridal pair are brought under the nuptial-shed, from the cradle, and here into a bason containing milk, the bridegroom places his feet and receives presents of cloths from the bride's parents, with a few pieces of jewels. He then partakes of some refreshment.

To this, another ceremony succeeds, the *Cangavam*—The *Cangavam* is a yellow dyed thread, which, no sooner tied to the wrists of the bride and bridegroom, the parties cannot on any account whatever quit the wedding house, until the whole of the ceremonies are concluded.

Before the *talli* or nuptial knot is tied, the family and friends assemble under the nuptial-shed, and place the bridegroom in a conspicuous station. The brahmin or priest, called *Popatheyar*, now proceeds to proclaim the marriage in the hearing of all present in the following words.

"*Gopalem*, the son of *Nauraganan*, the son of *Kistnen*, the son of *Itanen*, is to be joined in holy wedlock to *Parvathee*, the daughter of *Sandrasakaren*, the son of *Samban*, the son of *Sangaren*—*Gopalem*, the great grandson of *Itanen*, who was the father of *Kistnen*, who was the father of *Nauraganan*, who was the father of *Gopalem*, who is to be joined in matrimony to, *Parvathee*, the grand daughter of *Sangaren*, who was the father of *Samban*, who was the father of *Tandrasakaren*, who was the father of *Parvathee*, who is the bride. *Parvathee* is the person, who is to be given in marriage to *Gopalem*"—the last words are repeated thrice. This ceremony is called *Proraray*, or the ceremony of repeating the pedigree. At the conclusion of this proclamation, the bride, (who is obliged to remain in another apartment during the ceremony) is presented to the bridegroom. A near relative of the bridegroom being prepared with a brass or silver plate, on which are laid a rich bridal cloth, no matter of what color, some saffron, cocoanut, the nuptial medal, fastened to a yellow string, some beetle-nut, and flowers, puts the plate into the hands of the bridegroom's sister, or any of his near male relative, who after offering up the whole as a sacrifice to the gods, retires from the nuptial shed, accompanied by the bride, in her bridal cloth. She is then led back to the shed, and seated upon a small bundle of straw, containing fresh paddy, (see plate 3, book 1st) the *Popatheyar*, immersed all this while in astrological calculations in search of the lucky moment) takes the *talli* into his hands, and pronouncing a long benediction upon it, puts it into the hands of the bridegroom, desiring him to tie it round the neck of the bride. After which the bridal pair being placed on the nuptial seat, opposite the nuptial fire,—the bridegroom receives from the brother of the bride or any of her male relative, some toasted paddy, three several times, and the bridegroom, in return, gives him a silver toe-ring. Then follows the ceremony called *Cannyadamam*, or giving away the bride. The bride being adorned with the jewels, &c. the value of which had been previously settled, the parents of the bride lead her to the centre of the shed and in the hearing of the assembly, address her to this effect.—"Whereas, we the father and mother of this young woman, do with joint consent give this our daughter, for your lawful wife, with all the jewels, money, &c. she has, and is adorned with, to hold and enjoy her, and the said property for ever, so bless you God." Before the last words are uttered by the father of the bride, he puts a few rape-seeds into the right hand of the bride, and pours over it milk and water, thereby signifying, that the bride and all that she then possesses are the sole and undivided property of the

bridegroom, and that the bargain is finally closed, signed, sealed and delivered for ever.

The ceremony ended, the father of the bride gives the bridegroom a small gold ornament, called *Bottoo*, which is fastened to a string of black beads, called *Carrumani*, which the bridegroom ties to the neck of the bride, saying—"In the name of the great and potent god, *Boggeevaddy*, governor of the worlds, I tie this *Bottoo* to your neck, as a pledge of my unfeigned affection, which shall and will increase more and more, until death shall dissolve this holy and affectionate tie."

After the *Bottoo* is tied, a grinding stone and pestle are placed in the north-east corner of the nuptial shed. The married couple proceed to the stone and the bridegroom holds the bride's right foot, and places it on the stone, which he performs thrice, then adores the nuptial fire, and serves his family and the priests with ground sandal, garlands of flowers, and handfuls of beetle-nut, each of the priests also receives pieces of coin, and cloth.

The new married couple now ornament themselves with the *Bashiar* or *Subegum*, an ornament for the forehead, and sit and swing together. The same night a sacrifice is offered to the nuptial fire, called *Sally-pangum* or rice boiling. A small vessel being placed on the fire, the bride boils a little rice and when it is prepared, it is taken out in handfuls and thrown into the fire with much veneration.

Next follows a curious ceremony—the bride and bridegroom in order to plight their fidelity to each other, present themselves to *Vasishtar*, and *Avroothoodee*.* The bridegroom on his part, in the presence of *Vasishtar* pledges himself that he will through the assistance of its divine influence, love, cherish, and be faithful to his wife, swearing by it. The bride in like manner invokes *Avroothoodee*, to lend her assistance, to love, obey, and acknowledge her husband as her lord on earth.

Next morning the bridal pair take their nuptial seat, and pay adoration to the fire and offer sacrifices to it. The wedding party sit to dinner while the bridal pair wait upon them.

On the 4th day, the uncle of the bride (or the nearest male relative of the bride) dresses his niece like a young brahmin, but without the *Poonool*, and mounting her on a horse, the whole assembly walk in procession through a few streets of the *agraram* or habitation of the brahmins, accompanied with music, dancing girls, torches, &c.

Next morning the bridal pair, again adore the fire—then follows a ceremony called *Obasanaaggeny*, or extinguishing the nuptial fire—as soon as the fire is extinguished, the new married couple beg permission to offer *datchana* to the brahmins, that is, to serve out beetle-nut, and money, and after receiving the benediction of their families and the brahmins—the general blessings of the company at large, or *Maga Anseerradam*—a coloured mat is thrown over the nuptial seat, on which they lay a cocoanut, beetle-nut, and flowers. The bridal pair being again seated, the *Vopathegar* reads a portion of their Vedom or scripture, (that part relative to matrimonial duties) after which they prepare to conduct the bride to the house of the bridegroom, and during the interval, the relatives and most intimate friends sprinkle coloured water upon each other, rejoice and make merry.

The company now move in procession to the house of the bridegroom, where the whole partake of a sumptuous dinner, and the brahmins receive their customary fees.

14th ceremony, or *Neshagam*, performed when the bride comes of age. The semi barbarous condition of the Hindoos is not seen to greater disadvantage than in their disgusting violation of the best feelings of our nature, in this particular instance: for where decency would throw a veil over what

man in a more civilized state would not be permitted to pry into, the abominable priestcraft which rides rough shod over the hearts and consciences of the Hindoos, rudely penetrates the sanctity of female privacy and proclaims to the world what modesty and chastity alike forbid. The Astrologers demand to know the precise hour the menses appeared. If the hour be under the influence of the following stars, 1.—*Aswany*—2.—*Rogany*—3.—*Menooga*, *Serooshum*—4, *Poosum*—5, *Hootteram*—6, *Hustam*—7, *Sioory*—8, *Swady*—9, *Vesaigum*—10, *Annoosham*—11, *Morlam*, 12, *Ravady*—they conclude, the girl will be prosperous, happy, faithful and fruitful.

If however the hour happens under the influence of the following stars—13, *Mogain*, she will suffer affliction disappointment, and unhappiness throughout life. 14, *Poonarpoosam*—(a very bad star), she will be meretricious—15, *Kiroogay*—and 16, *Kaooay*, she will suffer extreme poverty—17, *Berany*—18, *Hawhelliham*—19, *Pooram*.—*Poorandm*, and—21, *Poorattanthy*, she will be very unfortunate, and become a widow, if not, be barren or want the necessaries of life.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| * 1 Ram—3, in and near the tail. | 10 Scorpion—3, in the tail. |
| 2 Bull—5, in the head and neck. | 11 Bow—11, to the point of the arrow. |
| 3 Pair—3, in or near the feet. | 12 Fish—32, in the second fish, and cord. |
| 4 Crab—3, in the body and claws. | 13 Lion—2, one on the tail. |
| 5 Virgin—2, on the arm and zoue. | 14 Pair—1, on the knee. |
| 6 Do. —5, near the hand. | 15 Bull—6, of the Pleiades. |
| 7 Do. —1, in the spike. | 16 Ram—3, in the tail. |
| 8 Balance—1, in the N. | |
| 9 Balance—4, beyond it. Scale. | |

To avert such appalling calamities sacrifices to these bad stars are offered. That barrenness may be avoided, they make an image resembling an infant, either of silver or brass, and offer it up as a sacrifice, this is called *Gurbadanam*.

Sunday, Tuesday or Saturday, are considered unlucky days for a woman to come of age—and the following days of the moon, are also unfortunate.

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Sadoorthee | 4th day of the week. |
| 2. Sustee | 6th do. do. |
| 3. Astamee | 8th do. do. |
| 4. Navamee | 9th do. do. |
| 5. Wvadasy | 12th do. do. |
| 6. Sadoothasy | 14th do. do. |
| 7. Pavernavamy | Full moon. |
| 8. Amavasy | New moon. |

The following *Satellites* are also held as unfortunate.

- b 1. *Veshacambam*.—2. *Adecunum*.—3. *Soolum*.—4. *Cundam*.—5. *Veyacantham*.—6. *Vuggeram*.—7. *Vadypaidam*.—8. *Pasegum*.—9. *Vitherethee*.

Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, are fortunate days.—The day of an eclipse, of the sun or moon, or the day of the *Pongole* feast,† are unfortunate for a young woman, and will be certainly attended with ill consequences. Under the influence of such bad days and stars, the brahmins exert their utmost powers with supplications, prayers and nonsensical ceremonies, to neutralize the evil or to shorten the period of suffering. They affirm that with all their prayers, and sacrifices, they cannot succeed in removing evil radically, but that the stars being appeased by sacrifices and prayers, the quantum of ill is diminished.

Marriages among Brahmins, as well as the other castes, cannot and do not take place throughout any part of the year, except in the months of *January*, *June*, and *August*.—They strictly observe as a rule that in case a married woman comes of age in the month of *Chittera* or April, to prevent her from

* Two of the celestial bodies, which their traditions report were once the frail tenants of clay. They were two lovers whose fidelity to each other was so remarkable that as a reward of their constancy the gods were pleased to translate them to the firmament above.

b Balance, four beyond it.

† The New year feast.

getting in that interesting condition agreeable to ladies who love their lords, she is removed to her parents' house, there to remain the month out, for say they, 'should a child be conceived, if a male, he will turn out a notoriously bad character, a thief, or something much worse: if a female, she will become a lost character. Such are the baneful effects of the April planet.

Sobhanam is the finale of the marriage rites.

Avant l'union corporelle des époux il est d'usages parmi les Brames, d'observer la jonction des étoiles, pour que les mariés aillent au lit un bon jour tel que le 4e 8e 10e 12e 14e ou 16e jour après l'âge de puberté de la femme: attendu qu'ils sont considérés comme des jours paires, propices et favorables aux époux.

Les mariés ne peuvent aller au lit les jours de Nouvelle Lune, ou d'Eclipse de soleil ou de lune ou la jour qu'un des membres de la famille serait mort. Et en outre si l'astrologie n'aide se son livre de sort, découvre que les époux se sont trouvés au lit pendant une des sus-dites circonstances; il prédit alors que le couple vivra par la suite malheureux et en discorde. Il est en son pouvoir de les séparer pendant les mauvais jours, et si le résultat de ses observations est favorable, on procède à la célébration de la cérémonie du *sobhanam*.

Les Prêtres, Parens, et amis étant assemblés le soir on leur offre, un présent appelle "*Paladanum*" qui consiste en fruits, cocos, bétel et ainsi que de l'argent; après quoi les convives se retirent dans une autre partie de la maison et s'occupent à chanter et faire de la musique, pendant que les Brames restent auprès des époux pour sceller et saisir le moment favorable à la consommation du mariage. Et avant que la nouvelle mariée, soit conduite dans la chambre à coucher, elle touche son père ou son oncle, qui prononce sur elle et son mari la benediction paternelle et les époux se retirent.

Semaudam, performed on the 4th, 6th, or 8th month, after the woman becomes enciente.—Fixing on a fortunate day, the woman and her husband, purify themselves by bathing. The woman clad herself with a new cloth, puts on her best jewels, with bangles of glass composition, called *Fullul*, flowers on her head, and assisted by her husband, they kindle the sacred fire and worship it. The man brings the bud of a *hankian flower*, which is bruised on a grinding stone by a young woman, the juice of it is squeezed through the skirt of a woman's new cloth, into the nostrils of the woman with child. This part of the ceremony is called *Poomasaram*. After the performance of this ceremony, a grand dinner is partaken by numerous guests invited for the occasion, and the priests are presented with cloths, money, &c.

PILGRIMAGES OF THE BRAHMINS.

There are divers *Vatterai* or pilgrimages, the following eight of which are the principal. *Devayatterai*, signifies holy pilgrimage, the due observance of which is strictly enjoined. The places for performing pilgrimages are, *Videnadam* in the Tanjore province, *Soobramanian* in Canara, *Palany*, in the Dindigul district; and *Teroopatty* in the zillah of Chittoor. Other sacred places are in abundance but the before mentioned are the most popular.

Terooyatterie means the ablution performed by the Hindoos in different sacred rivers, such as the Ganges, &c. For the performance of ablution, seven hundred pilgrimages to different places are prescribed, of which only eight are of the first rate importance.

1st.—The ablution performed in the river *Ganges*, at *Benares*, takes precedence of all others and is of the highest merit.

2d.—The Hindoos are enjoined to bathe in the confluence of the *Ganges*, the *Yamun*, and the *Sarasvaty*.

3d.—They are enjoined to bathe at the source of the *Ganges* in *Gungacouha* near the *Himalaya Mountains*.

4th.—They are required to perform ablution in the *Sea* near

Gangasagarum, a place about three hundred miles east of Calcutta.

5th.—Water from the Ganges must be carried in *cavadees* or pots to *Videnadam*, in order to bathe the Deity at that place.

6th.—It is ordained that all the Hindoos shall perform ablution in the *Ganges* at *Benares* as well as at *Prayage*. That water from the *Ganges* must be carried in *cavadees*, and that the person carrying the same, shall adore the old *Ganges* at the *Godavery*, near *Rajamundry*, and consecrate the water at *Ramaseram*. And after performing ablution in the *Sheddan*, with the permission of *Madanaswamy*, the water is to be delivered to Callicrannan.

7th.—It is the injunction of the Hindoo religion that Hindoos shall perform their ablution in the 10 rivers undermentioned, which are considered sacred—the *Ganges*, the *Rana*, the *Kishna*, the *Viney*, the *Canvey*, the *Bumundy*, the *Booshi*, the *Canagany*, the *Toonga*, the *Sinda* or *Indus*.

Pilgrimages for the performance of ablution in the 10 rivers, should be undertaken on the day Jupiter enters Aries, and the other signs of the Zodiac.

8th.—Great shall be the reward of those who perform ablution in the *Sheddo*, at the bridge erected by *Ramachandra* over the strait, that connects the eastern and southern seas together, near *Ramaseram* in the district of *Ramanadapoorum*, in the zillah of *Madurei*. Those who perform ablution in this strait, should worship *Ramalinga Swamy* the deity of *Ramaseram*, and also perform ablution in *Goady Teertam* in the temple. The pilgrimage to this place is performed for the expiation of sins committed in a former birth, and also to obtain children.

A tank called *Mahinacolum* in *Cambaconam* is also considered holy and the ablution in which must be performed, on the day Jupiter enters Leo.†

The places of pilgrimage are *Guya*, *Benares*, *Woojinee Duarga*, *Moye Conjee* and *Madurei*.

If *Shardum*, or a funeral rite be performed to the memory of the dead under the *Bannian* tree at *Guya*, it shall not only be the means of obtaining the salvation of the performer's forefathers, but his family will flourish in this life and abound in prosperity. When Hindoos perform their ceremonies in the above places, they should fast, and have their heads shaved.

Devayatterie, are of two kinds—the first is performed before starting on a pilgrimage to the following places.—*Teroopatty*, *Hagnbilam*, *Sruaylum*, *Stree-Calastry*, *Conjivaram*, *Solunghipponum*, *Teroopooroor*, *Teraovannomalay*, *Ramaseram*, *Sreerunga*, *Madurei*, *Pulany*, *Wanhook* and *Soobramauyayam*—and the second before proceeding to the following places—*Teraovaloor*, *Periapolliam*, *Hogapolum*, *Gondoor* and *Combaccnum*.

† This festival occurs once in twelve years and the following account respecting it we copy from the 2d No. vol. I. of the *Madras Missionary Register*. "The Ganges besides taking upon itself the form of water, sometimes takes upon itself the form of a very handsome woman. At a certain time, after it had taken the latter form, that form became very uncomely, which caused it much grief: whereupon, it complained, to *Bramah*. *Bramah* desired it to go and ascertain the cause of *Seven*, who, he said, would give the necessary information. *Ganges* went to *Seven*, and said, didst not thou fetch me from the *Dhevalogum* (world of the gods) to this earth on the hair of thy head? How is it then, that my original beauty has been thus deformed? *Seven* in reply, said, because many millions of great sinners have visited and bathed in you, and because you have borne away all their sins, and shown them the good way; all their sins have surrounded you, and this deformity has happened to you. However, I will cause a holy bathing to originate in *Combaccnum*, and grant to it the virtue of removing all sins. I shall there be known at the bank of the holy bathing, by the name of *Veeyarassouren*, and *Purathee* by the name of *Veeyalatchee*. At the great *Mahamahusa*, once in twelve years, even when the planet *Jupiter* comes into the sign of *Leo*, should you leave this and go to bathe there, your sins being removed, you will again obtain your original beauty. As many will come to that bathing so must you.

"The deluded heathen believe, according to the above story, that the very waters of the Ganges come into this tank once in twelve years, and that it thereby becomes efficacious to the removing of all sins. Hence persons from almost all parts of India come here on the day appointed; and in order to make this festival the more popular all the great Cars in *Combaccnum*, are caused to be drawn on the day previous to the bathing.



THE HINDU BRIDE.

En Rodríguez, del

Book I Plate 3.

Madrid 1837.



SUPERSTITION OF THE HINDOOS.

While a Brahmin is thinking of any undertaking in which he may be desirous to embark, should he at the time be fortunate to hear a person praying, or the sounds of music, &c. he concludes that the business he was thinking about will terminate favorably to his interests.

The Brahmins state, that should a man or woman, or even a child sneeze, while a person is engaged in thought, it is lucky, provided the person who sneezed, had a piece of gold applied to his nostrils at his birth; a practice which the Hindoos invariably perform, but should this ceremony have been omitted, of necessity, they say, the sneezing is unlucky.

When a Brahmin sets out on an affair of marriage, or some business of consequence, should he accidentally knock his head against the door-frame of his house, he will postpone the business, considering it as a bad sign. If a Brahmin's book drop from his hands, it is a bad omen: if he stumble on his way when proceeding on any business, it is a bad omen: if he meet with two bullocks at bay, he will not proceed further, nor will he do so if he has been pulled by the hand, while quitting his house. Unseasonable rain, thunder, hurricane, and a cat crossing the street, are all regarded as unlucky signs.

FOOD.

Brahmins believe in the doctrine of transmigration, therefore they abstain from animal food: they live entirely on vegetable diet.

It must be here observed, that Braminy women do not take their meals with the men, but are obliged to eat in private, with their own sex, after the men had been first served and satisfied. A wife is not allowed to walk alongside her husband; she must walk behind him; she ought not to sleep, until he is asleep, nor remain asleep after he awakes. If she is sitting, and he comes in, she should rise. The Hindoos inculcate that the wife should worship her husband while he lives, and when he dies she should be burnt with him. The household duties of a Braminy woman and her submission to her husband's will & pleasure are very remarkable—she commands nothing, inherits nothing, even after the death of the husband.

Explanation of the marks worn on the forehead, breast and arms by the Smartah sect.—Some of the marks worn on the forehead by Brahmins, are not worth particularizing. It must be considered sufficient to know that the three perpendicular white marks worn on the forehead are in memory of *Brama*, *Vishnoo* and *Siva*, and the sanlal spot in the centre in honor of the 31 fiery eye of *Ispuran*, or *Siva*.

The ceremonies performed on the sick and dying, among the Brahmins of the Smartah sect.—When a Brahmin lies sick without any hope of recovery; and when all the medicines and all the skill of the physician, prove ineffectual, to ward off any longer the approaches of death, the relatives of the patient evince much concern for his future state, and to obtain for him a happy transmigration, his spiritual guides the *Vopatheys* are summoned to the death bed to offer the last consolations of religion: and by *pojras* and *munthrams* to propitiate the gods and to secure for the dying man the favor and approbation of Heaven. In the selection of their *Vopatheys* they invariably give the preference to those who are both priests and doctors and renowned for piety and virtue.

The following ceremonies take place at the closing scene in the Hindoo's life. One or more learned *Vopatheys* being summoned and all the family present, the principal priest pours a little water from the holy fountain of *Casi*, kept in their *Pagodas* for such purposes, into the mouth of the patient, muttering at the same time a short prayer in *sanscrit*. The patient is next assisted to sit up on his bed, when he takes a little soft water, drawn from his own or neighbour's well and pours it on the feet of the principal priest, covering them with flowers

in token of his great humiliation. The priests must sit alongside the sick man, and offer up prayers to the diety, but chiefly to *Chutraputren*, the great judge of the dead, the patient very devoutly joining in prayer. This done, the sick man takes a tepid bath and being placed on his bed repeats the following address. "*Illustrious, learned and pious father!* God is now please I shortly to eat the slender thread of my life. I am in consequence, much concerned about my future state, and in order to be absolved of all my sins, before I depart hence to meet that great judge, *Chutraputren*, I hasten to make a full confession of my guilt, but more particularly my bad works, since I knew to distinguish between the good and the evil, and being aware that confession of sins together with the alms I am about to distribute, will clear me of my guilt, and entitle me to a happy transmigration; I proceed to divulge the secret sins, I have committed." And here the patient makes a confession of all his sins to the best of his recollection, not forgetting, to mention his works of charity, and the feasts and fasts he observed. Confession ended, the priest pronounces the absolution. Should the dying man be in affluent circumstances he confers on the Brahmins in attendance the following costly donations.

1st, *Gejjadanam*, donation of an elephant, properly ornamented.

2d, *Boomeedanam* or donation of landed property, such as a village, a garden, fields, or a house.

3d, *Auswahdanam*, donation of a valuable horse well fitted up with saddle, &c.

4th, *Cannadanam*, i. e. presenting the Priest with a young woman as a wife bought with money.

5th, *Daasheedanam*, the donation of a pagoda dancing girl also bought with money and fitted up with jewels.

6th, *Pahlehoodanam* or the gift of a palanquin together with a sum of money for the maintenance of the palke bearers.

7th, *Gohidanam*, the gift of a good cow and calf.

8th, *Soolatanam*, the gift of a silver ornament resembling a fork, which is given in memory of the three gods.

9th, *Calehavam pouseneeka* the gift of a white pumpkin, together with some money.

10th, *Bovylanam*, or distribution of money to the Brahmins on the public roads.

11th, *Aknondanam*, or the act of feeding the poor in the streets.

A PRAYER ON BEHALF OF THE DYING MAN.

"Thou great and merciful *Bhagavan!* the creator and governor of all the worlds, visible and invisible. The Creator of the Luminaries and of all Celestial and Terrestrial beings, and of all animals, insects, and verdures. To thee do we pay our homage, beseeching thee to grant, this our dying friend, a happy transmigration. Now heaven, earth, waters, fire, seas, rocks, hail, sun, moon, stars, day and night, and all the *Reeshess* of saints, on earth, the glorious constellations of the known and unknown worlds, extol and praise the name of the great God the destroyer and reviver of our souls and bodies." The patient now executes his last will and testament bequeathing the greater portion of his worldly goods to his children. To his lawful wife he leaves, landed property, money and jewels, (to be controlled by the head of the house) not forgetting legacies, for maintaining some charitable institution or other for the daily or weekly maintenance of the Brahmins. Legacies to pagodas to keep up certain festivals; to build *Choultries* and to support *war sheels* for the accommodation of travellers.

Sevanrasittam i. e. Ceremonies performed when the patient is in the last agonies of death. A black cow (one with a black tongue is preferred) and calf are brought into the house and the former being decked with some jewels, a woman's cloth is put on its neck and the lying man is directed to worship the beast which becomes the property of the Brahmins in attendance: he is now left to breathe his last in peace.





“ We observe that agreeably to his promise, the Publisher of the Work on “ HINDOO CASTES,” has brought out the last Numbers of that publication in somewhat better style than the first Number, which made its appearance in June last. Three Books, as they are termed, were issued simultaneously on the 30th ultimo ; the first, which is delivered *gratis* in lieu of the former issue, contains three colored Lithographs ; the second four ; and the third two : and it is but justice to say, that the execution of these Plates is superior to those on which we had occasion to remark sometime ago. The fourth Number will come out next month and treat of the Hindoos of the 4th division, 1st class, viz. “ NULVALAULUK” or the agricultural tribe : it will be illustrated by three colored Lithographs. It is expected that this will be still superior to those already executed ; the Publisher being determined to spare no exertion that can tend to the improvement of the undertaking.”

“ We understand also, that the price of each Number will be reduced to Subscribers from four rupees, to two rupees fifteen annas : a most liberal reduction, when the very great expense attending the getting up of works of this kind in India, and particularly in Madras—is taken into consideration ; and for which nothing but an enlarged sale of the work can remunerate the publisher. We hope that it will meet with the patronage it deserves, and that the encouragement will be such as to encourage the continuation of the “ HINDOO CASTES,” on a scale which promises to make them the most complete thing of the kind that has been hitherto attempted.”—*The Examiner*.

MADRAS, *May* 11, 1838.

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