



## 64 GENERAL REFLECTIONS.

insufficiency of human wisdom to find out or explain his ways.

In some more modern writers we find the power of fancy, and the force of ridicule, employed to deprive mankind of their greatest consolation, and society of its best support;—but to what other motive can this endeavour be ascribed, than to a licentious vanity courting a criminal distinction?

Many of the early Christians, even some of the fathers of the church, previous to their conversion to Christianity, had adopted the opinions of Plato, and other Greek philosophers; and hence, doubtless, it arose, that some of the doctrines then professed are evidently tinged with their notions.

The belief of three states after this life, which is still enjoined by the church of  
Rome,





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Rome, seems to have been taken from Plato; but this, as well as other opinions, might probably be traced to a more distant origin.

The doctrine of the Metempsychosis was openly avowed by some of the early sects \*, who brought passages from the holy scriptures in support of their extraordinary fictions.

They likewise believed in the eternity of matter, *not supposing that any thing could be formed from nothing*. Nam et quidam infirmiores hoc prius credere de materiâ potius sub-jacenti volunt, ab illo universitatem deductam, secundum philosophos †.

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\* See Letter from Father Bouchet to M. Huet Bishop of Avranches.—Lettres edific. & curieuses, tome xii. p. 170. Edit. de Paris, 1781.

† Tertul. de Refur. Carn. c. 91.





Most of the Gnostics imagined that the Divinity (Demiurgus) who created the world, was different from, but subordinate to, the Supreme Ruler of the universe\*.

Origen, and others, believed in the destruction and succession of worlds; and that these revolutions had ever existed and would continue throughout eternity†.

This opinion, as well as that of many of the Greeks on this subject, seems to be derived from the doctrine of transmigration; the soul that is said to pervade the globe, being supposed to be infused into that which may succeed it.—The Origenists thought that the souls of mankind had existed before the body, and, like the Hindoos, rejected the idea of eternal punishment.

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\* Ap. Eu. Præp. Ev. xi. 18.

† Orig. in Proem. &c.





## GENERAL REFLECTIONS.

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Lactantius, who was selected to be the preceptor of the son of Constantine, and for his eloquence was distinguished by the appellation of *the Christian Cicero*, likewise believed in the pre-existence of the soul \*.

The opinion of its being an emanation of the Divinity, which is believed by the Hindoos, and was professed by the Greeks, seems likewise to have been adopted by the Christians. Macrobius observes, *Animarum originem manare de cælo, inter rectè philosophantes indubitata constat esse fidei* †. —Saint Justin says, the soul is incorruptible, because it emanates from God ‡: and his disciple, Tatianus the Assyrian, observes, that man having received a portion of the Divinity is immortal as God is §.

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\* Lactant. Div. Inst. vii. 5.

† Macr. in Som. Scip. i. 9.

‡ S. Jus. de Refur. 9.

§ Tatian. cent. Grec. N. 10.





Many believed that the Deity had confided the care of the things of this world to celestial beings, destined to that purpose. Saint Justin Martyr says, in his Second Apology to the Senate of Rome, " God  
" who created the universe, having arranged  
" the elements, and the sun, the moon, and  
" the stars; having disposed the seasons, and  
" their various productions; having placed  
" under man the things of the earth; com-  
" mitted the human race, and all that is un-  
" der heaven, to angels, whom he has com-  
" manded constantly to watch over them \*."

Athenagoras, in an address to the Emperor Marcus Aurelius, observes, " The  
" Christians admit of a number of angels  
" and spirits that God the creator distributed  
" over the stars, the heavens, the world, and  
" all that it contains †."

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\* St. Just. Apol. ii. n. 5.

† Athen. Legat. Chr. n. 10.





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## GENERAL REFLECTIONS. 69

Some even imagined, that the space between *the heavens and the earth*, was inhabited by beings that were enemies to mankind, like the evil genii of Greece, and the Deutas of Hindostan \*.

“All the heretics of the early ages,” says Father Bouchet, “being infatuated with Platonism, ascribed to angels, what that philosopher said of inferior deities †.”

Had we sufficient data to go upon in examining the history of the Hindoo religion, we might probably follow the pure worship of an almighty, just, and merciful God, through all its stages of corruption, to its present complicated state. The following Sketches may perhaps enable

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\* S. Hier.

† Lettres edif. & cur. tom. xii. p. 191. Ed. de Paris, 1781.





## [ 70      GENERAL REFLECTIONS.

the reader to form some judgment upon this subject ; and whatever reason we may have to consider the religion we profess as a peculiar revelation of God, we ought to look upon the sincere believers of another, with less severity than men in general have done. To hate or despise any people, because they do not profess the same faith with ourselves ; to judge them illiberally, and arrogantly to condemn them, is, perhaps, in fact, to arraign the wisdom and goodness of the Almighty.





## S K E T C H II.

*Sources of Information concerning  
Hindoostan.*

I N tracing the progress of the arts and sciences, we have been accustomed to consider Egypt as the country which gave them birth; but an opinion has lately been entertained, that they were probably brought thither from Hindoostan. An analogy has been discovered between the religion of the Hindoos and Egyptians; a similitude is found in some of their customs; and a certain acquaintance with the same sciences seems to have been common to both. To wrest an honour from the Egyptians which they have so long and so peaceably enjoyed, to surmount the prejudices that are in their favour, and to

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over-





## 72 SOURCES OF INFORMATION

overturn an opinion that has been confirmed by the sanction of so many ages, seems a work so replete with difficulty, that I think no one who shall attempt it, should flatter himself with hopes of complete success. When opinions are once adopted, men seldom go fairly in quest of truth; there is always a bias to these; they generally look for what may strengthen, and receive unwillingly what may combat them.

In our early youth we imbibed, with classic learning, a degree of veneration for the Egyptians, and hence a predilection in their favour that will probably remain with us during our lives. We thought we beheld the arts and sciences coming from Egypt, and spreading themselves in those countries, to which we always look back with a degree of enthusiasm; it never entered our imagination to go beyond that, and to seek their origin in a more distant clime; but we gave up our admiration to the





## CONCERNING HINDOSTAN. 73

people to whom the Greeks themselves owed that instruction which rendered them superior to other nations.

From Greek and Roman authors we learn but little of the Hindoos; and the attention they excite in history seems rather to arise from their having been conquered by some great hero, or mentioned by some favourite writer, than from their own consequence as a nation. We were indifferent about a people of whom we had scarcely any knowledge. But the desire of conquest, and the thirst of gain, having brought us to a more intimate acquaintance with them, and the spirit of inquiry being roused, we go back with avidity to those passages which had left but a slight impression, and are surprised to see the same manners and customs, the same religion and laws, existing, and now in use, which we find to have prevailed at the remotest period we can trace.

Though





## 74 SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Though it be almost three centuries since Europeans first navigated to the East Indies, it is but a very few years since such inquiries were set on foot, as could lead us to any satisfactory information concerning a people who perhaps merit the attention of the curious, more than any other nation on the globe. But, happily, the obscurity in which they were involved seems gradually to be dissipating; and we may now flatter ourselves that we are in the way to obtain a knowledge of all that is to be learnt of their history. How far that may extend, is yet uncertain; but the lights which have already been obtained, sufficiently shew them to have excelled as a civilized and polished nation, before any other that we are acquainted with.

We are informed that Mr. Hastings, soon after his appointment to the government of Bengal, conceived the idea of procuring a code of the laws and customs of the Hindoos,





## CONCERNING HINDOSTAN. 73

doos, with an intention to conciliate their affections, by paying a proper regard to their institutions and prejudices. For this purpose he invited from Benares, and other parts of the country, Brahmans learned in the Sanskrit language; the most authentic materials were collected, and translated from the original text into the Persian idiom. The Brahmans began the work in May 1773, and finished it in February 1775\*.

A society was some years afterwards established at Calcutta, in order to make inquiries into the civil and natural history, antiquities, sciences, and literature of Asia, which, we are told, has made considerable progress; and that the president, Sir William Jones, as well as some of its other members, are now sufficiently acquainted with the Sanskrit to be able to translate it with facility.

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\* It was translated from the Persian into English by Mr. Halhed.





## 76 SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Of the local state of the country, the best account we yet have, is to be found in a *Map* and *Memoir*, published by Major Rennel, who was several years surveyor-general of Bengal and the other provinces that are subject to that government. Beside the surveys and inquiries made by Major Rennel and other professional men, our geographical knowledge has been greatly improved, in consequence of the embassies sent from Calcutta to Thibet and Poonah, and the marches of our armies in the late war with the Mahrattas, across the peninsula from the Ganges to Guzerat. Men of science having accompanied the embassy to Poonah, and served in those armies, the precise situation of particular places, with their directions and distances from each other, were accurately ascertained.

I am indebted for much curious, as well as useful, information to Lieutenant Colonel Polier, Mr. John Stuart, and Mr. George Foster.





## CONCERNING HINDOSTAN. 77

Foster. Lieutenant Colonel Polier resided near thirty years in Hindostan, part of which he spent at Delhy, and its neighbourhood. Mr. Stuart \* and Mr.

Foster

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\* Mr. Stuart went from Mafulipatam to Hydrobad, the capital of the Nizam's dominions, and from thence to Seringapatam, the capital of Myfore, in which country he remained fourteen months. He came from thence to Madras. In his second journey, he went from thence to Hydrobad, Aurengabad, Jynagur, Delhy, through the Panjab, to within sixteen miles of Lahore. He returned to Delhy, and came by the way of Oude and Benares to Calcutta. After remaining some time in Bengal and Bahar, he went by sea down the Perfian Gulf, and from Ghrey, at the mouth of the Euphrates, crossed the desert in the widest diagonal part to Aleppo, and, embarking at Scanderoon, came to England. In 1783, he went to Moscow, with the intention of going through Tartary to India, but finding it difficult to procure a passport for proceeding from Astracan, he came by the way of Vienna to Italy, and went from thence by sea to Constantinople. Going by Diarbukkeer (or Mesopotamia), Mosul, and Kirkout, to Bagdat, he went from thence into Persia. After staying some months at Ispahan, Sheeras, &c. he came to Bassorah, and from thence through





## 78 SOURCES OF INFORMATION.

Foster \* have visited more of the interior parts of India than any other Englishman I have heard of; and those gentlemen, by speaking fluently some of the Oriental languages, and by living in habits of intimacy with the natives, have been able to learn things unknown to us, and to explain others which seem to have been misapprehended †.

But the honour is due to the French, of having first brought out, from the recesses of  
the

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through Annadolia (or Natolia) to Constantinople and Vienna. He has since then visited Swedish Lapland, above a degree farther north than Torno, and is now prosecuting his travels through other parts of Europe.

\* Mr. Foster went from Madras by land to Calcutta, from thence to Benares, Agra, Delhy, &c. to Kaffimire, where he continued several months, and going by Cabul through Persia, came by the Caspian Sea to Russia, and from thence to England.

† Though much miscellaneous information concerning the Hindoos may be found in different authors of our own and other nations, who have written on Hindostan, none that I am acquainted with, have  
made





## CONCERNING HINDOSTAN. 79

the Hindoo temples, and communicated to the world in a regular and scientific manner, the astronomy of the Brahmans, of which, till then, we had but vague and uncertain notions. It was *Le Voyage dans les Mers de l'Inde*, by Monsieur le Gentil \*, that first enabled us to form a right conception of it, and to perceive those characteristic marks which distinguish it from that of

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made *them* the objects of their immediate and impartial inquiry. Indeed, until now, the sources of information have been uncertain and confined; but, at present, as we have got possession of the key to knowledge, the *Sanskrit language*, and of the country where its chief repository is supposed to be, we may expect, from the zeal and abilities of Sir W. Jones, and the other members of the society of Calcutta, to have our curiosity gratified, upon better and more authentic grounds.

\* See *Voyage dans les Mers de l'Inde*, fait par Ordre du Roi, a l'occasion du Passage de Venus sur le Disque du Soleil le 6 Juin 1761, et le 3 du même Mois 1769, par Monsieur le Gentil, de l'Academie des Sciences.

other





## 80 SOURCES OF INFORMATION, &amp;c.

other nations. Since then, it has been more fully illustrated, in a most ingenious and learned treatise, by Monsieur Bailly \*.

Whether the Egyptians received it from the Hindoos, may be a subject of farther inquiry; but if, after a careful examination, we are obliged to allow the Hindoos to be the inventors of a science that requires so much ingenuity and observation, we shall be inclined to suppose that they were likewise the authors of that mythology which will be found to bear so great a resemblance to that of the Greeks and Romans.

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\* See *Traité de l'Astronomie Indienne et Orientale*, par Monsieur Bailly, de l'Académie Française des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres, des Sciences, &c.





## S K E T C H    III.

*Sketch of the History of Hindoستان.*

THE ancient Greeks seem in general to have believed that the natives of India were *aborigines* \*, and that they never either emigrated themselves, or received any colony from strangers †.

The learned Hindoos say, that Hindoستان ‡, extending from the river  
Indus

\* Diod. ii.

† Strab. xv.

‡ *Hindoستان*, so called by foreigners; but I am informed that no such words as *Hindoo* or *Hindoستان* are to be found in Sanskrit, which we may suppose to be the original language of that country, or at least the oldest now existing there. In Sanskrit it is called





## 82 HISTORY OF HINDOSTAN.

Indus\* on the west, to the Burumpooter †  
on the east, and from the mountains of  
Thibet

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*Bharata*, and *Bharat-virsh*.—Bharat appears, likewise, to be the name of an ancient imperial family.—Hindoostan seems, evidently, to come from the Persians.—*Stan*, in Persian, signifies *country*, and *Hindoo* may have been taken from a corruption of *Sinde*, the name of the river that separated Bharata from the Persian dominions. (Rennel—Wilkins—Stuart, &c.) But to conform to the practice now in use, I shall continue to call the country *Hindoostan*, and its original inhabitants *Hindoos*.

\* From the city of Attuck, in lat. 30. 20. to Moul-tan. This river is called Attuck, which in the Sanskrit language is said to signify *Forbidden*, as it was the boundary of Hindoostan on that side, and unlawful for the Hindoos to go beyond it without permission. Below Moul-tan it is called Soor, until it divides itself into a number of streams near Tatta; the principal one is called Mehran; but the river, when generally spoken of, is called in the Sanskrit language *Sindhoo*, and vulgarly *Sinde*. By Europeans it has, from the earliest times, been called *Indus*. (Pliny says, “*Indus ab incolis appellatus*,” &c. Lib. vi.)

† A river east of the *Ganga*, or *Ganges*, the proper name of which is *Brimha-pooter*, or the son of *Brimha*.  
These





## HISTORY OF HINDOSTAN. 83

Thibet on the north, to the sea on the south ; acknowledged the dominion of one mighty

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These two rivers derive their sources from the mountains of Thibet, from whence they proceed in opposite directions, the Ganges to the west, and the Burum-pooter to the east. The Ganges, after wandering through different valleys, rushes through an opening in the mountains at Hurdwar, and flows, a smooth navigable stream, in a course of about 1350 miles, through the plains of Hindostan to the sea. In its way it receives eleven capital rivers, some of them equal in magnitude to the Rhine. From its arrival on the plains at Hurdwar to the conflux with the Jumna, its bed is in most places about a mile and a quarter wide ; from thence its course becomes more winding : about 600 miles from the sea, its bed in the broadest part is three miles over, in the narrowest half a mile, the stream increasing and decreasing according to the seasons. In the summer months it is fordable in some places above the conflux with the Jumna, but the navigation for small vessels is never entirely interrupted : below the conflux, the depth is much more considerable, as the additional streams add more to that, than to its breadth. At the distance of 500 miles from the sea, the channel is 30 feet deep when the river is at the lowest : but the sudden and great expansion of the





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mighty sovereign: but that in this immense empire there were several hereditary

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stream, depriving it of sufficient force to sweep away the sand and mud that is thrown across it by the strong southerly winds, the principal branch cannot be entered by large vessels. About 220 miles from the sea in a straight direction, but 300 in following the windings of the river, the branches called the rivers Cassembazar and Jellinghy unite, and form the river Hughly, on which is the port of Calcutta. The navigation of ships in this river is always dangerous, as the sand-banks frequently shift, and some project so far into the sea, that the channels between them cannot be easily traced. The medium rate of motion of the Ganges is about three miles, and during the rains, and while the waters flow into it from the inundated lands, from five to six miles an hour. In general, there is on one side of the river an almost perpendicular bank, more or less elevated above the stream according to the quantity of water: near the bank the water is naturally deepest; on the opposite side, as the bed slopes gradually, the water is shallow, even at some distance from the margin: but this is the natural effect of the windings of great rivers, the current being always strongest at the external side of the curve.

In





## HISTORY OF HINDOSTAN. 85

ditary kings, who paid him a certain tribute, though in the internal government

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In places where the stream is remarkably rapid, and the soil loose, such tracts of land are sometimes swept away as would astonish those who have not been accustomed to see the increase and force of some rivers, during and immediately after the periodical rains in the tropical regions. The effects of the stream at those curves sometimes produce a gradual change in the course of rivers, and in proportion as they encroach on one side, they quit the other. Hence there are instances in Hindostan, of towns, said by ancient authors to be situated on the banks of rivers, that are now at a considerable distance from them. The Hindoos, in their fabulous account of the Ganges, say, that it flows from the foot of Vishnou, the preserving deity, and in entering Hindostan, passes through a rock, resembling the head of their sacred animal, the cow. The British nation, with its tributaries, enjoy the whole of its navigable course.

The Burumpooter, taking almost an opposite direction, runs through Thibet, where it is called Sampoo, or Zianciu, which is said to bear the same interpretation with the Ganga or Ganges, *the river*. It washes the border of the territory of Lassa, and ap-





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ment of their countries they were independent \*.

One of the ancient dynasties of their emperors is called the Sourage-buns, or the dynasty of the children of the sun; the

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proaching to within about 200 miles of Yunan, the westernmost province of China, turns suddenly back, and running through Affam, enters Bengal on the N. E. During a course of 400 miles through Bengal, it so much resembles the Ganges, that a description of one may serve for both, excepting that, for the last 60 miles before their junction, it forms a stream from four to five miles wide. The waters of those great rivers being joined, form a gulph of considerable extent, interspersed with islands, some of them several leagues in circumference. Major RENNEL.

\* Diodorus Siculus says, "India in quatuor latera distincta est; quod ad orientem, quodve ad meridiem vergit, magnum mare circumdat. Quod arctos spectat, Hæmodus mons ab ea Scythia, quam habitant hi qui appellantur Sacæ, dividit; quartum, quod est ad occidentem fluvius Indus terminat, omnium fere, post Nilum, maximus. Magnitudinem Indiæ ab oriente ad occasum, scribunt stadiorum viginti octo millium duorum et triginta. *Lib. II. cap. x.*

other





## - HISTORY OF HINDOSTAN. 87

other the Chander-buns, or that of the children of the moon \*.

After these we hear of the house of Bharat: and the wars between two of its branches, the Kooroos and the Pandoos, are the subject of a celebrated epic poem, called the Mahabharat †, said to have been written by Krishna Dwypayen Veiâs, a learned Brahman, above 4000 years ago. A famous battle, fought on the plains of Delhy, at the beginning of the Kaly-Young, or present age, 3102 years before Christ, gave, to Arjoon, one of the five sons of Pandoo, and favourite of the god Vishnou, the empire of Bharatvirsh, or Hindostan.

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\* The names, however, in Sanskrit, according to Mr. Wilkins, are properly, *Soory-vangs*, and *Chandra-vangs*; or, *the race of the Sun*, and *the race of the Moon*.

† The Bhag-vat Geeta, which is an episode of this poem, has been translated from the Sanskrit language into English by Mr. Charles Wilkins. It contains dialogues between Arjoon and Krishna, who is supposed to have been the god Vishnou in one of his incarnations.

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About





## 88 HISTORY OF HINDOSTAN.

About 1600 years before Christ, a war with the Persians \* is recorded; and about 900 years after that war †, another is mentioned, during which the Hindoo emperor is said to have been carried prisoner into Persia, and his son, who succeeded him, to have become tributary to the kings of that country. The tribute having been withheld by the second Phoor, or Porus, is assigned as the cause of the invasion of India by Alexander ‡. Some Hindoo writers mention the victory obtained by him over Phoor, and say that he quitted

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\* No mention is made of this war by any ancient European historian.

† The first Darius, according to Herodotus, invaded India about 504 years before Christ, which is probably the war here meant. The error in the date, which is about 196 years, may have arisen in copying or translating from the Hindoo manuscript.

‡ Pliny says; "Colliguntur a libero patre ad Alexandrum magnum, reges eorum CLIV annis quinque millia, cccxi adjiciunt et menses tres." *Lib. VI. cap. xvii.*

Hindostan





## HISTORY OF HINDOSTAN. 89

Hindoostan on account of a mutiny in his army\*.

After the return of Alexander, it appears that several revolutions happened among the different branches of the reigning family; and that many of the tributary princes, taking advantage of these convulsions, rendered themselves independent. The country thereby lay open to easy conquest; those princes were un-

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\* This corresponds with the accounts given of the mutiny on the Banks of the Hyphasis, or modern Beyah. Major Rennel supposes, that Alexander erected his twelve altars at Firosepour, near the junction of the Beyah, or Hyphasis, with the Setlege, or ancient Hefudrus.

It may be mentioned here by the way, that Greek coins, medals, and engravings, are sometimes found in India. I have seen two cameos of exquisite workmanship; and saw a beautiful medal of Alexander, about the size of a half crown piece, which was given to the Nabob of Arcot. It should be remembered that Alexander had his own coin struck in his army by Greek workmen that he carried with him for that purpose.

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willing to appeal to a sovereign for protection, whose yoke they had shaken off; and invaders, instead of meeting a united people, and having to contend with the force of the whole empire, seem only to have been separately opposed by those whose territories they attacked.

The Greeks, who remained in possession of some of the northern provinces, were successfully attacked by a Hindoo prince named by them Sandrocottus\*. Seleucus, then master of the country between the Indus and Euphrates, made a treaty with him 303 years before Christ; but whether he upon that occasion retained, or ceded, the provinces conquered by Alexander, is extremely doubtful.

About 150 years after this treaty, it appears that some of the same provinces which had been subdued by the Greeks, were conquered by the Bactrians, whose empire

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\* Plutarch. Justin. lib. xv. cap. iii.





## HISTORY OF HINDOSTAN. 91

was formed about 250 years before Christ, by Theodotus, when governor of Bactriana, under Antiochus Theos. Theodotus was forced to yield his conquests in India to Mithridates Arfaces king of the Parthians, who considerably extended them; and the Parthians were in their turn expelled by a Tartar nation, called by Ptolemy and others *Indian Scythians*, who are said to have spread themselves on both sides of the Indus, to the sea\*.

These conquests, however, may be said to have extended little farther than the bordering provinces; but the invasions of the Mogul Tartars overturned the Hindoo empire, and, besides the calamities that immediately attend conquest, fixed on succeeding generations a lasting train of miseries. They brought along with them the spirit of a haughty superstition; they exacted the conversion of the vanquished; and they

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\* Strabo.—Justin.—Excerpta Valefiana.





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came to conquer, and to remain. The success of the first invaders invited many to follow them; but we may consider the expedition of Tamerlane as that which completed the ruin of the Hindoo government. Having, in the year 1398, sent his son Mirza Pir Mahomed before him, he entered India himself; relieved Mirza, who had taken, but was afterwards shut up in Moulton; defeated the armies of the Mahomedan king of Delhy, and made himself master of his capital. Wherever he appeared he was victorious; neither Mussulman nor Hindoo could resist his fortune; nor could any one who opposed him, expect his mercy. Marking the march of his army with blood, from the banks of the Attuck to the eastern side of the Ganges, and from thence back by a different route, he returned to Samarcand.

The disappearance of this angry meteor was followed by a long scene of warfare among the Mahomedan invaders themselves;





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felves; and the first of the descendants of Tamerlane who may be said to have firmly established himself on the throne of Delhy, was Acbar. He succeeded his father Homaon in 1556, and died in 1605, after a successful reign of about fifty years. He considerably extended the dominion of the Mahomedans, and was the first of their princes who regularly divided the empire into *Soubadaries*, or viceroyships, some of which were equal in extent to the largest European kingdoms. Over each of these he appointed a soubadar, or viceroy. The soubadaries were again divided into provinces, governed by naibs, or nabobs, who, though subject to the soubadar, had the privilege of immediately corresponding with the emperor's minister; the decision of civil causes belonged to the Cadi; the revenues and expences were superintended by a person appointed from the court; and the government of the principal forts was confided to officers who were independent of the viceroy.

During





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During his long reign, Acbar caused inquiries to be made, to ascertain the population, the natural productions, the manufactures, &c. of the different provinces; the result of which, with various regulations arising therefrom, were formed into a book called the *Ayin Acbaree*, or institutes of Acbar, which still exists in the Persian language. He endeavoured to correct the ferocity of his countrymen; was indulgent to the religion and customs of the Hindoos; and, wishing to revive the learning of the Brahmans, which had been persecuted as profane by the ignorant Mufftis, he ordered the celebrated observatory \* at Benares to be repaired, invited the Brahmans to return to their studies, and assured them of his protection.

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\* Doctor Robertson says, this observatory was built by Acbar; whereas I have always understood that it was only repaired by his orders; and hence, probably, it may arise, that the ancient Hindoo architecture is mixed with the pointed Saracen or Gothic arch, which is now to be perceived in the building.





## HISTORY OF HINDOSTAN. 95

The dominion of Acbar does not seem to have extended south beyond the 21st degree of latitude. From thence, southward, a great part of the country was still subject to a very powerful Hindoo prince, to whom many great Rajahs \* paid tribute. The last of these Princes dying without issue, most of his territories submitted to usurpers; and two Mahomedans, who had served as generals in his army, found means to establish themselves independent sovereigns of Golcondah and Viziapour.

Aurengzebe, son of Shaw Gehan, the grandson of Acbar, completed the conquest of many countries that his predecessors had in vain attempted to subdue. While in the Deckan, he ordered the city of Auren-gabad to be built, to commemorate his

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\* Princes, or Nobles, very much resembling the great Nobility of Europe under the feudal governments. *Rajah* is derived from a Sanskrit word, signifying *splendor*.

victories.





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victories\*. His dominions, according to Major Rennel, reached from the 10th to the 35th degree of north latitude, and were in some parts, of nearly an equal extent in breadth. His revenue is calculated to have been about thirty-five millions of pounds sterling:—an astonishing sum, especially in a country where the productions of the earth that are necessary for the support of man, are scarcely above a third of the price that the necessaries of life bear in England †.

Aurengzebe died in 1707, after a reign of forty-nine years; and though, to attain the throne, he confined his father to his seraglio, caused his brothers to be put to

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\* His first wife is buried there, to whose memory he erected a mosque, and a magnificent tomb.

† Beside the difference in the price of food, it must be considered that the native of Hindostan has no farther occasion for fuel, than what may be necessary to prepare his temperate meal; nor for clothing, to guard him against the inclemencies that are unknown in those mild regions.

death,





## HISTORY OF HINDOSTAN. 97

death, and was guilty of many other enormities; yet, being once established on it, and seeing no competitors, he paid such close attention to the affairs of government and to the impartial administration of justice, was so judicious in his political conduct, and so successful in his wars, “that he deserves to be ranked with the ablest princes who ever reigned in any age or country.”

It was the policy of the court of Delhy frequently to change the viceroys. A historian relates, that one of them left the city, sitting with his back towards the head of the elephant; and on being asked the reason, replied, “That it was to look out for his successor.” The vast distance of some of the provinces from the throne, suggested the propriety of this measure, as well as of the regulations we have mentioned. But, with all the policy that human foresight might devise, such extensive dominions could only be governed and preserved, under wise and vigorous rulers; and such, when





## 98 HISTORY OF HINDOSTAN.

we consider the ordinary course of nature, and the usual education of princes, could not be expected in any long succession. Aurengzebe was a phenomenon that rarely appears in the sphere of royalty: his mind was formed during his long struggle for the empire, while he was obliged to command his passions, and study the ways and characters of mankind. "His sceptre was too ponderous to be wielded by the feeble hands of his successors;" and, in less than sixty years from his death, his wonderful empire was reduced almost to nothing.

Nizam al Muluc, viceroy of the Deckan, who, without open rebellion, had in reality rendered himself independent, to avert the storm with which he was threatened from the ministers of Mahomed Shaw, is supposed to have suggested to *Thamas* Kouli Kawn, who was then at Candahar, his celebrated invasion of Hindostan.

*Thamas*, after a single battle, entered the city of Delhy, and the vanquished emperor laid





## HISTORY OF HINDOSTAN. 99

laid his *regalia* at his feet. Having collected immense wealth, and reserved to himself all the countries belonging to the Mogul empire that were on the other side of the Indus, he reinstated Mahomed Shaw on the throne with much solemnity, and returned with his army into Persia. It is said that, before his departure, he informed the emperor, who the persons were who had betrayed him, and gave him much wholesome advice. But the fabric was now shaken to its foundation, the treasury was empty, the troops were mutinous, the prince was weak, the ministers were unfaithful, and the viceroys of the distant provinces, though they affected submission, no longer respected commands which they knew could not be enforced, and in the end rendered their stations, that formerly were of short duration, hereditary in their families. All that now belongs to Shaw Allum, the present nominal emperor, is the city of Delhy, and a small district round it, where, even deprived of sight by the

H 2

barbarous





## 100 HISTORY OF HINDOSTAN.

barbarous hand of a rebel, he remains an empty shadow of royalty, an instance of the instability of human greatness, and of the precarious state of despotic governments. Under these, while the liberty and life of the subject are constantly exposed to danger, the crown totters on the head of the monarch: he who is the most absolute, is frequently the least secure; and the annals of Turkey, of Persia, and of the Mahomedan conquerors of Hindostan, teem with tragic stories of dethroned and murdered princes.

Throughout Hindostan there are many rajahs to be found, who still enjoy the territories of their ancestors. Some, happily, never were subdued, and owe their independence to the natural situation of their possessions, which renders invasion difficult. Others were permitted, from policy or necessity, to retain them, on condition of paying a stipulated tribute.

The





CSL

HISTORY OF HINDOSTAN. 101

The Hindoos are the only cultivators of the land, and the only manufacturers. The Mahomedans who came into India were foldiers, or followers of a camp, and even now are never to be found employed in the labours of husbandry or the loom.

H 3





## S K E T C H    I V.

*Government. Public Buildings. Forts, and  
Places of the Residence of Rajahs.*

THE government throughout Hindostan seems to have been anciently, as it is at present, feudal; and if we may judge from the apparently happy state of those countries where the destructive hand of the conqueror had not yet been felt, and from the inviolable attachment which the Hindoos bear to their native princes, we must conclude, that, under them, they were governed on principles of the most just and benevolent policy. In those countries the lands were highly cultivated; the towns and their manufactures flourished; the villages were composed of neat and commodious





modious habitations, filled with cheerful inhabitants; and wherever the eye turned, it beheld marks of the protection of the government, and of the ease and industry of the people. Such was Tanjore, and some other provinces, not many years ago.

Under the ancient Hindoo government, there were several kings or *great Rajahs*\*, who were tributary to the emperor; and other inferior Rajahs, or nobles, who paid tribute to their respective superiors, and who, when summoned to the field, were obliged to attend them, with a certain number of men in arms, in proportion to the value of their possessions. Besides the estates of Rajahs, there were other hereditary lands belonging to persons of less note, and some that were appropriated to charitable and religious purposes. We likewise find, that in many parts of Hindostan, certain lands, or commons, were attached

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\* Maha-Rajah.





to the different villages, which were cultivated by the joint labours of their inhabitants. The care of these lands was committed to the elders of the village, and their produce applied to maintain the poor, to defray the expence of festivals, and to pay dancers and players, who might occasionally be employed for the amusement of the villagers.

The *Ryuts*, or peasants, were allowed a certain portion of the harvest, by the lord or proprietor of the land, with which they maintained their families, provided and kept their cattle, and were furnished with feed for the succeeding season. The portion given to the peasant seems to have varied, and to have been chiefly determined by the fertility or barrenness of the soil, the ease or difficulty of cultivation, or the abundance or failure of the harvest.

In countries that are plentifully supplied with water, the labour of the husbandman  
is





is much diminished, and his crops are generally very abundant; but on the coast of Coromandel, where the soil is for the most part sandy, and water scarce, greater exertion is required, which is often but scantily repaid.

In such countries as have not the advantage of being watered by considerable rivers; or in such parts where the water cannot be conveyed from them to the adjacent fields; tanks were made, which, being filled during the periodical rains, furnished water for the rice-fields, and for the cattle in the dry season. Some of these are of great extent, and were made by inclosing deep and low situations with a strong mound of earth\*. Others of less magnitude, for the use of temples, towns, or gardens, are of a quadrangular form,

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\* On the bank of the great tanks, are generally found a *Choultry* and a Temple.

lined





lined with stone, descending in regular steps from the margin to the bottom \*.

In the towns, as well as in most of the villages, are *Choultries*, or public buildings for the reception of travellers, which were erected and endowed by the munificence of the prince, the generosity of some rich individual, or, not uncommonly, in consequence of some pious vow. A Brahman resides near, who furnishes the needy traveller with food, and a mat to lie upon; and contiguous to them is a tank or well, that those who halt, may have it in their power to perform their ablutions before they eat, or proceed on their journey.

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\* I have seen some of these measuring between 3 and 400 feet on the side, and regularly lined with granite. The Hindoos, from some superstitious notion, never construct any thing of an exact square, but rather oblong; though the difference is frequently so small as scarcely to be perceptible to the eye.





The *Deiwuls*, or temples, called by the Europeans *Pagodas*, are still very numerous, especially in the southern provinces, and some of them of such remote antiquity, that no account is left, either in writing or by tradition, when or by whom they were erected. But the northern provinces being first conquered, the seat of the Mahomedan government fixed, and its greatest force exerted in those parts; most of the temples were destroyed, the images of stone broken, and those of metal melted to cover the floors of the mosques and palaces, that the faithful Mussulman should have the satisfaction daily to trample on what had been held sacred by the Hindoo.

The temples at Hurdwar, where the Ganges enters Hindostan; at Matra, the supposed birth-place of Krishna; at Oudgein; at Benares; and at Jaggernaut on the coast of Orisa; a temple on the top of a mountain at Trippety, about 40 miles N. E.





N. E. of Arcot ; one on an Island called Seringham, which is formed by the rivers Cavery and Coleroon, near Trichanapoly ; and one on the island of Ramasseram, between Ceyloan and the continent, seem from the most distant times to have been constantly held in the highest veneration. There are also many others that are much resorted to ; but of all those of which I have any knowledge, I believe that in Seringham \* is the largest.

At

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\* About a mile from the western extremity of the island of Seringham, and at a small distance from the bank of the Coleroon, stands this celebrated pagoda. It is composed of seven square inclosures, one within the other, and standing at 350 feet asunder. The walls are of stone and mortar, and twenty-five feet high : every inclosure has four large gateways, with a high tower over them, one being in the centre of each side, and opposite to the four cardinal points. The outward gateway to the south is richly ornamented with pillars, some of which are single pieces of granite 33 feet long, and 5 in diameter, and those that form  
the





At the pagoda of Jaggernaut, people of all casts and ranks eat together, without

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the roof of the gateway, which is flat, are still larger. The pagoda is consecrated to Vishnou, and in the inner inclosure are the altars and the image of that deity. The Brahmans, who belong to the pagoda, are very numerous, and with their families are said to amount to some thousands of souls.

During the struggles between the English and French nations for superiority in the Carnatic, and in support of the Mahomedan viceroys, whose cause they respectively espoused, the repose of the Brahmans was disturbed, and their temple profaned; it was alternately taken possession of by the French and English armies. When those rude intruders first attempted to enter it, a Brahman who stood on the top of the outer gateway, after having in vain supplicated them to desist, rather than be a witness of such pollution, threw himself on the pavement below, and dashed out his brains.

About half a mile east from this pagoda, is another called Jumbookishna. When the French, who, with their ally Chunda Saib, had been for some time shut up in those two pagodas, surrendered them to Mr. Laurence in June 1752, a thousand Rajahpout seapoys refused to march out of Seringham until assured that their conquerors would not pass beyond the third inclosure,





110 GOVERNMENT, &c.

out distinction or pre-eminence. This is peculiar to that place, being no where else allowed; and the permission, or rather

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inclosure, declaring they would die to a man in defending the passage to it: but Mr. Laurence, admiring their courage, and respecting their devotion, far from giving them offence, ordered that none should go beyond the second.

ORME, &c.

Tavernier gives the following description of a temple near Amidabad, which the Mahomedans had converted into a mosque: "Il y avoit, en ce lieu là, une  
"pagode dont les Mahomedans se sont mis en possession pour en faire une mosquée. Avant que d'y  
"entrer, on passe trois grandes cours, pavées de marbre, et entourées de galleries, et il n'est pas permis  
"de mettre le pied dans la troisième sans oter ses souliers. Le dedans de la mosquée est ornée à la  
"mosaïque, la plus grande partie étant d'agates de  
"diverses couleurs, qu'on tire des montagnes de  
"Cambaya, qui ne sont qu'à deux journées de là.  
"On y voit plusieurs sepultures des rois idolâtres, lesquelles sont comme autant de petites chapelles  
"à la mosaïque, avec de petites colonnes de marbre, qui soutiennent une petite voûte, dont le sepulcre  
"est couvert."

*Voyage de Tavernier, tome iii. page 59.  
édition de Paris, 1724.*

order,





order, for the pilgrims of different casts to do so, is said to be in commemoration of their hero and philosopher Krishna \*, who always recommended complacency and affection for each other. A great quantity of victuals is every day prepared, and, after being placed before the altars, is partaken of by the pilgrims. The Brahmans belonging to this pagoda pretend, that it was built by order of the emperor, at the beginning of the Kaly-Young †, in honour of Vishnou, by whom the house of Pandoo was peculiarly protected ‡.

There are ruins on the coast of Coromandel, near Sadras, called, by Europeans, *the seven pagodas*, by the natives, Mavalipuram.

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\* Krishna is represented in the *Mahabarat*, and other works, to be the god Vishnou in one of his incarnations. See SKETCH III.

† See *Astronomy of the Hindoos*, SKETCH XI.

‡ See SKETCH III.





puram. The remains of a palace and temple, of great extent, may yet be traced. Some of the inscriptions and hieroglyphics with which the walls abound, are no longer understood; and though tradition informs us that this place was at a considerable distance from the shore, many of the ruins are now covered with water, and when it is calm may be seen under it \*.

The immense temples, hewn out of the solid rock, and containing almost innumerable pillars, statues and figures in bas relief, that are to be seen on the islands of Salfette and Elephanta, and at Iloura, about 20 miles from Aurengabad †, announce a

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\* There are pieces of sculpture here in very perfect preservation, which, with many others that are scattered over Hindostan, prove the great superiority of the ancient Hindoos in this art, to their later descendants.

† For a particular description of those temples, see Thevenot and Anquetil, &c.: but besides these, others of a similar kind are to be met with in different parts of Hindostan.

work





work of such astonishing labour, that the people are firmly persuaded it could not have been executed by men, but was performed by genii, at the order of the gods.

The Hindoo poets frequently mention *Duarka* as a place highly celebrated. It is said to have stood at the extremity of the peninsula, and to have been swallowed up by the sea, a few days after the death of Krishna.

At the hour of public worship, the people are admitted to a peristyle, or vestibule, the roof of which, in the large temples, is supported by several rows of pillars; and while the Brahmans pray before the images, and perform their religious ceremonies, the dancing women dance in the court, or under the portico, singing the praises of the god to the sound of various musical instruments.

The inauguration of a temple is attended with great ceremony and propor-





tional expence. After it is completely finished, the Brahmans are perhaps obliged to wait several months, before they find, by their astrology, a fit day for that solemnity. The day is afterwards annually celebrated, and is called *the feast of the Dewul*. Every temple is dedicated to some particular deity, and each has its annual feast; beginning with the day on which the inauguration was performed: it lasts ten days, and to temples that are held in particular veneration, pilgrims resort on that occasion from almost every part of Hindostan. Few come without an offering, by which means alone the revenue of some of the temples is rendered very considerable; but, in the countries that are under the Mahomedan yoke, the Brahmans, as well as the pilgrims, are usually taxed by the government.

Throughout Hindostan we meet with many places of defence, which, from their  
con-





construction, as well as from tradition, appear also to be of great antiquity, and seem designed to resist the effects of time as well as the attacks of an enemy. These alone are sufficient to shew, that the humane laws of Brimha could not secure the mild Hindoos from being disturbed by the fatal effects of ambition; and that the passions in every climate are sometimes too powerful to be restrained, even by the wisest and most salutary regulations. The building of places of security we find commanded by the law itself; for in the code of Hindoo laws, in a recapitulation of the qualities and things necessary for a ruler, it is said, "He shall erect a strong fort in the  
" place where he chuses to reside, and shall  
" build a wall on all the four sides, with  
" towers and battlements, and shall enclose  
" it with a ditch, &c."

We likewise find the following passage in the Heetopades:

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"What





“What sovereign, whose country is furnished with strong holds, is subject to defeat? The prince of a country without strong holds, is as a man who is an outcast of his tribe. He should build a castle with a large ditch and lofty battlements, and furnish it with machines for raising water, and its situation should be in a wood, or upon a hill, and where there are springs of fresh water, &c.”

Some of those fortresses are by situation so strong as to baffle all the efforts of art in a regular attack, and are only to be reduced by surprise or famine. Such is the fort now called Dowlatabad near Aurengabad, Golcondah near to Hyderabad, Gualior \*, and many others. But these

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\* Gualior, belonging to the Rajah of Ghod, was taken by surprise by the English in 1780 from the Mahrattas, who were then in possession of it.

It stands on a rock, about four English miles in length, of unequal breadth, and nearly flat at the top. The sides are almost perpendicular in every part;





these seem only to have been intended  
by the natives as places of retreat in case  
of

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part; for where the rock is not so naturally, it has been made so by art. The height from the plain below is unequal, but generally from 200 to 300 feet. The rampart that goes round the top conforms to the edge of the precipice. The only ascent is by stone steps, which are defended at the bottom by a wall and towers, and in the way up by seven strong stone gateways, at certain distances from each other. On the top there are many noble buildings, reservoirs for water, and even cultivated land. At the north-west foot of the mountain is a large and well built town.

Gualior was once in possession of the Mahomedans, but was recovered by the Hindoos. Tavernier says, " Elle (la ville) est batie le long d'une montagne qui vers le haut est entourée de murailles avec des tours. Il y a dans cet enclos quelques étangs, que forment les pluyés, et ce que l'on y sème est suffisant pour nourrir la garnison; ce qui fait que cette place est estimée une des meilleures des Indes. Sur la pente de la montagne qui regarde le N. W. Shaw Jehan fit batir une maison de plaifance, d'ou l'on voit toute la ville, et qui peut tenir lieu de fortreffe. Au bas de cette maison on voit plusieurs idoles de bas relief taillées dans le roc, les quelles ont toutes la figure de demons, et il y en a une entre autres, d'une hauteur extraordinaire. Depuis que les rois Mahomedans se sont rendus maitres de ce pais-la, cette fortreffe est





of need, and for the security of their families and treasures in times of danger; and not for their usual residence, or the defence of the country.

In open and plain countries, the forts are constructed with high walls, flanked by round towers, and are inclosed by a wet or dry ditch \*. The Rajah and his family generally dwell within the fort, nearly adjoining to which is the pettah, or town.

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“ le lieu ou ils envoient les princes et grands signeurs  
“ quand ils veulent s'affurer de leur perfonne.”

TAV. tome iii. page 52.

Gualior resembles other forts that I have seen, being situated on inaccessible mountains, except by passages secured and defended at different places. On the sides of the mountain above the passage, quantities of stones are generally to be found piled up, and ready to be tumbled down on the heads of the assailants.

\* I have known instances of their having aligators bred in the ditches of their forts, which corresponds with what Pliny mentions. In speaking of the different nations of India he says, *Horata urbs pulchra, foffis*





The place of residence of the Polygar Rajahs, or those whose possessions are in woody and hilly countries, is frequently found surrounded with an impervious thicket, closely planted with bamboos and other thorns. A road leads from the open country through the thicket to an area in the centre of it, sometimes forming a plain of several miles in circumference, on which is the town. Should it be near to mountains, a road similar to the other communicates with them, the entrance to which is commonly defended by a fort, or a deep trench or breast-work. These roads are narrow; prolonged by frequent windings, intersected by barriers; and, when an attack is apprehended, obstructed, by cutting ditches and felling trees. By such frequent interruptions, the progress of troops towards the plain is necessarily slow, during

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*fossis palustribus munita; per quas crocodili, humani corporis avidissimi, aditum, nisi ponte, non dant.* PLIN. lib. vi. cap. 20.





which they are liable to be constantly annoyed by those who may be concealed in the thickets \*. Should these difficulties be

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\* The following is a description of the attack of one of those places, as extracted from a letter of Colonel Fullarton to Lord Macartney and the Council at Madras, contained in his Account of military Operations in the Southern Parts of India, in the Campaigns of 1782, 1783, and 1784 :

“ On our arrival before the town of Shevigerry,  
“ he (the Polygar chief) retired to the thickets, near  
“ four miles deep, in front of his *Comby*, which they  
“ cover and defend. He manned the whole extent of  
“ a strong embankment, that separates the wood and  
“ open country; was joined by other associated Po-  
“ lygars, and mustered eight or nine thousand men in  
“ arms. Finding that they trifled with our propofals,  
“ the line was ordered under arms in the morning,  
“ and orders were given for the attack. It com-  
“ menced by the Europeans, and four battalions of  
“ Seapoys, moving against the embankment which  
“ covers the wood. The Polygars, in full force, op-  
“ posed us, but our troops remained with their fire-  
“ locks shouldered, though under a heavy fire, until  
“ they approached the embankment, where they gave  
“ a general





be surmounted, the last resource of those who are attacked, is to retire to the moun-

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“ a general discharge and rushed upon the enemy.  
“ By the vigour of this advance, we got possession  
“ of the summit, and the Polygars took post on the  
“ verge of the adjoining wood, disputing every step  
“ with great loss on both sides. As we found the  
“ *Comby* could not be approached in front, we pro-  
“ ceeded to cut a road through impenetrable thickets  
“ for three miles, to the base of the hill that bounds  
“ the *Comby* on the west. We continued to cut our  
“ way under an unabating fire from 8000 Polygars,  
“ who constantly pressed upon our advanced party,  
“ rushed upon the line of attack, piked the bullocks  
“ that were dragging the guns, and killed many of  
“ our people. But these attempts were repulsed by  
“ perseverance, and before sunset we had opened a  
“ passage entirely to the mountain, which is extremely  
“ high, rocky, and in many places almost perpen-  
“ dicular. Having resolved to attack from this un-  
“ expected quarter, the troops undertook the ser-  
“ vice, and attained the summit. The Polygar parties  
“ posted to guard that eminence being routed, after  
“ much firing we descended on the other side and  
“ flanked the *Comby*. The enemy seeing us masters  
“ of the mountain, retreated under cover of the  
“ night by paths inaccessible to regular troops, and we  
“ took possession of this extraordinary recess.”

tains.





tains. Even the common roads through the *Pollams*, or possessions of these Rajahs, have generally thick woods on each side of them, and gateways or barriers across, which, besides serving as a defence, are intended for the purpose of levying duties on merchandise.





## S K E T C H V.

*Casts, or Tribes.*

THE Hindoos are divided into four *casts* or tribes, the *Brabman*, the *Khatry*, the *Bhyse*\*, and the *Soodera*. These *casts* are at present again separated into two parties, or sects, though we must suppose them to have been originally united. The one is called the Vishnou-Bukht, and the other the Shiva-Bukht, or the followers of Vishnou, and the followers of Shiva. The former distinguish themselves by painting the forehead with a

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\* The name in Sanskrit is, *Vishvas*; or, as it is pronounced in some parts, *Bishvas*.

horizontal





horizontal line, and the latter with a perpendicular one \*.

Accord-

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\* Beside the four *casts* above mentioned, there is an adventitious tribe or race of people, called in the Sanskrit, Chandalas; and on the coast of Coromandel, Pariars; who are employed in the meanest offices, and have no restrictions with regard to diet. Their number, compared with that of any other *cast*, is inconsiderable, and seems evidently to consist of those persons that have been expelled their *casts*, which is a punishment inflicted for certain offences. Were a Hindoo of any of the other *casts* to touch a Chandala, even by accident, he must wash himself and change his raiment. He would refrain from the productions of the earth, if he knew that they had been cultivated by a Chandala. A Chandala cannot enter a temple, or be present at any religious ceremony. He has no rank in society, and cannot serve in any public employment. Hence the punishment of expulsion, which is supposed in its consequences to extend even to another life, becomes more terrible than that of death.

Strabo and Diodorus Siculus erroneously divide the Hindoos into seven tribes. Into this mistake they have been led by supposing the Vishnou-Bukht, and Shiva-





According to the Hindoo account of the creation, as contained in the sacred books, the Veds \*, and explained in different Sastras †, Brahma, or God, having commanded the world *to be*, created Bawaney, who, dancing and finging the praises of the Supreme, dropped from her womb

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Shiva-Bukht, together with the Chandalas, to be *tribes*: or, by taking for *tribes*, some of the professions into which the Sooderas are divided.

\* The Veds, or as pronounced in some parts of Hindoostan, Beds, and on the coast of Coromandel, Vedams, contain all the principles of their religion, laws, and government, and are supposed to be of divine origin. The Tallinghas, and Malabars or Tamouls, generally change the B into V, and terminate the Sanskrit words with an M.

† Some of the Sastras are commentaries on the Veds, and have been written by different ancient Pundits. The Neetee Sastra is a system of ethics. The Dharma Sastra treats of religious duties, &c.

Pooran, which we often find mentioned, literally signifying *ancient*, is a title given to a variety of works which treat of their gods and heroes.

three





three eggs \* upon the ground, from which were produced three beings, Brimha, Vishnou, and Shivah. To the first,

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\* In the account given of the birth of those three beings, we may find an analogy with the opinions of some Egyptians and Greeks. The Thebans, in comparing the world to an egg, said that it had come out of the mouth of the Supreme Being \*. In the verses ascribed to Orpheus, it is said that God having produced a large egg, and broke it, from thence came out the heavens and the earth †. Pythagoras made use of the same allegory; and we are told, that the *Orphiques*, who pretend to have preserved the doctrines of Pythagoras, abstained from eating eggs, as the Brahmans do now. In the orgies of Bacchus, the egg was consecrated, and held in veneration as a symbol of the world, *and of him who contains every thing within himself*. “*Confule initiatos  
“liberi patris in quibus hac veneratione ovum co-  
“litur, ut ex formâ trecti ac penē sphærat atque un-  
“diqueversum clausâ et includente intra se vitam,  
“mundi simulachrum vocatur ‡.*”

\* Euseb. Præp. Ev. i. 10.—& lib. iii. c. 11.

† Apud. Athenag. legat. pro Christ. N. 18.

‡ Macrobi. Saturn. viii. cap. 16.





Brahma gave the power of creating the things of this world ; to the second, that of cherishing and preserving them ; and to the third, that of restraining and correcting them.

Brimha created the Brahman from his mouth : his rank was, therefore, the most eminent ; and his business, to perform the rites of religion, and to instruct mankind in their duty.

He next created the Khatry from his arms ; and his duty was to defend the people, to govern, and to command.

He then created the Bhyse from his thighs and belly ; and his business was to provide, and to supply by agriculture and traffic.

The Soodera he created from his feet ; and to him devolved the duty to labour, to serve, and to obey.

He





He then proceeded to create all other animate and inanimate things; and the Supreme Being infused into mankind the principles of piety, of justice, of compassion, and of love; of lust, of avarice, of pride, and of anger; with understanding and reason, to preside over and apply them.

Brimha having reflected within himself, and being inspired by the *principle of wisdom*, wrote rules for the promotion of virtue, and the restraining of vice; fixed the duties of the Brahman, the Khatry, the Bhyse, and the Soodera; and calling these writings *Veds*, he delivered them to the Brahman, with power to read and to explain them \*.

The

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\* "The natural duty of the Brahman is peace, self-restraint, patience, rectitude, wisdom, and learning."

"The





The Brahmans shed no blood, nor eat any thing that has had life in it\*; their diet is rice and other vegetables, prepared with a kind of butter called ghee†, and with

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“ The natural duties of the Khatry are, bravery, glory, not to flee from the field, rectitude, generosity, and princely conduct.”

“ The natural duty of the Bhyse is, to cultivate the land, to tend the cattle, to buy and sell.”

“ The natural duty of the Soodera is, servitude.”

“ A man being contented with his own particular lot and situation, obtaineth perfection.”

“ A man by following the duties which are appointed by his birth, doeth no wrong.”

“ A man's own calling ought not to be forsaken.”

*Bhagvat Geeta.*

Only the Brahmans may read the Veds; the Khatries may hear them read; but the other *castes* may only hear the Sastras, or Commentaries on the Veds.

\* Porphiry and Clement of Alexandria, speaking of the ancient Brahmans, say, they drank no wine, nor eat any animal food.

† *Ghee* is butter melted and refined, which, thus prepared, may be kept a considerable time, even in a hot climate.





ginger and other spices; but they consider milk as the purest food, as coming from the cow, an animal for whose species they have a sacred veneration.

This veneration for the ox may have been ordained, to preserve from slaughter an animal that is of so great utility to mankind, particularly in Hindostan, which is productive but of few horses, comparatively with the extent of the country, and the number of its inhabitants. The veneration in which the ox was held by the Egyptians, may have been borrowed from the Hindoos, or may have arisen from the same cause, which may likewise have given birth to *the bull of Zoroaster*. Cicero observes, that it was the utility of certain animals that occasioned their being worshipped by the Egyptians and other nations\*. Plutarch

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\* “ Ipsi, qui iridentur Egyptii, nullam belluam, nisi  
“ ob aliquam utilitatem quam ex ea caperent consecra-  
“ runt,





tarch says nearly the same thing\*. A similar regard seems to have been shewn for the ox by the Phenicians. Porphiry says, that a Phenician would sooner eat a piece of human flesh than taste that of an ox †. In the early ages of Athens it appears, that not only this animal, but all beasts of labour were reserved from slaughter, even from being offered in sacrifice, and which was one of the laws renewed by Draco.—In the code of Gentoo laws we find, besides preserving the animal from being killed, “ that if any one shall exact labour from  
“ a bullock that is hungry or thirsty, or  
“ oblige him to labour when fatigued or  
“ out of season, the magistrate shall fine  
“ him.”

All Brahmans are not priests, yet all priests are Brahmans. Those who are not

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“ runt, concludam belluas a barbaris propter beneficium  
“ consecratas.” Cic. de Nat. Deor. Lib. I. N. 37.

\* Plut. de Isid. et Osir.

† Porph. de Abst. 11.

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of





of the order of the priesthood, whether followers of Vishnou or of Shiva, may serve, but not in menial offices ; we often find them acting as secretaries, and superintendants, to persons of high rank, as factors to bankers and merchants : and there are instances of Brahmans being first ministers, not only to Hindoo princes, but even to Mahomedans, being preferred for their knowledge, sobriety of manners, and constant application. Some even bear arms, but none of these can be admitted into the priesthood, and, in their appearance, they are only distinguished from the other Hindoos by the mark on their forehead. They likewise, however, abstain from animal food ; and they meet with respect from the members of the other *casts*, though not in so great a degree as the priests. But those who are of the priesthood, confine their attention to the performance of religious ceremonies, to the service of the temples, to study, and to the education of youth.

The





The priests never carry weapons of any kind, nor is it supposed to be fit for them to employ them, even in their own defence. They are patiently to submit to violence, and leave it to God and the laws to avenge them.

But throughout these laws, which were most probably composed by the Brahmans, reigns an uncommon degree of partiality to their *cast*. They claim a pre-eminence in rank, even to their princes, or *rajahs*, who are of the second, or Khatry *cast*. A *rajah* will receive, and taste with respect, the food prepared by a Brahman, but a Brahman dare not eat of any thing that may have been touched by one of another *cast*. In the administration of justice, the punishment of a Brahman for any crime is milder, and in general of a less disgraceful nature, than that of another man for the same offence; and they have descended to the most minute circumstances, in order





to preserve that deference and respect which they have established as their due.

It is said, in their laws, “ If a Brahman  
“ commit a crime deserving of a capital  
“ punishment, the magistrate shall, to  
“ prevent his committing a similar crime  
“ in future, sentence him to perpetual im-  
“ prisonment.—There is no crime in the  
“ world so great as that of murdering a  
“ Brahman; and therefore no magistrate  
“ shall ever desire the death of a Brahman,  
“ or cut off one of his limbs.

“ Whatever orders such Brahmans as  
“ are Pundits shall deliver to the Ryuts  
“ from the Saffra, the Ryuts shall ac-  
“ knowledge and obey.

“ If a Soodera give much, and fre-  
“ quent, molestation to a Brahman, the  
“ magistrate shall put him to death.

“ If





“ If a Brahman go to wait on a  
“ prince, the servants and *derbans* shall  
“ not obstruct his entrance, but give him  
“ a ready admission.

“ If a Brahman be passenger in a boat,  
“ he shall not pay any thing to the water-  
“ man; and he shall enter and leave the  
“ boat before any other of the passen-  
“ gers,” &c.

In settling precedence, and making way  
on the road, all are obliged to yield to the  
Brahmans\*.

The functions of royalty devolve with-  
out exception on the Khattry *cast*; and

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\* Diodorus Siculus, in speaking of the casts  
among the Hindoos, says, “ Primum est philosopho-  
“ rum qui ceteris, numero pauciores, supereminent  
“ dignitate. Hi ab omni opere immunes, neque  
“ serviunt cuiquam neque imperant.”

*Diod. Siculus, Lib. II. cap. x.*





the possessions and authority of their *rajahs* are hereditary, descending in the line of legitimate *male* primogeniture. But as the right of blood descends only to *this* degree, in default thereof the prince may adopt any one of his kinsmen to be his successor \*, who, from the time of his adoption, obtains the rights and the appellation of his son.

The younger branches of the families of *rajahs* generally serve in a military capacity, and have sometimes lands given them, which they hold by a feudal tenure.

All commercial transactions are committed to the *Bhyse*, or *Bannian*.

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\* Instances of this kind frequently occur. *Viziam-ram-rauze*, the present *rajah* of *Vizianagaram*, was adopted in preference to his elder brother *Sittaram-rauze*.

The





The Soodera *cast* is by far more numerous than all the other casts together, and comprises the artisan, and the labourer of every kind. The mechanics and artisans are again divided into as many classes as there are professions. Ninety-eight subdivisions of the different casts have been reckoned by the Danish missionaries, who have given an account of their names, and different employments \*. All follow the professions of their fathers. None can quit the class he belongs to, or be admitted, or marry, into another: and hence probably that resemblance that some have pretended to observe in each class, as if composing one great family.

The cheerful resignation of the Soodera to his inferior state in society, with the impossibility of rising above it, besides the effect of education, may be ascribed to the influence of his religion. He is taught by it to be-

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\* De la Croze, Hist. du Christ. des Indes.





lieve that he is placed in the sphere he now moves in, by way of trial, or for offences committed in a former life, and that by piety and resignation he will enjoy greater happiness in another.

Though the other *casts* enjoy greater liberty with respect to diet than the Brahmans, yet they scrupulously refrain from what is forbidden them, and will not partake of what may have been provided by any of an inferior *cast*, or different religion \*.

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\* Were a Hindoo to break those rules, he would be expelled from his cast. It having been found requisite to send some regiments of Seapoys from one English settlement to another by sea, those who were Hindoos were permitted to provide and carry with them water and provisions for their own particular use : but one of the ships happening to be longer in the passage than had been expected, nothing remained to them, for several days before their arrival at land, but a very small quantity of dry rice to each daily, without water to dress it, and scarcely more than sufficient to wet their mouths; yet they could not be prevailed on to taste