



and the mystery was revealed. The slave had been ordered to remain at a distance, but his curiosity being excited by the extreme caution that was observed, he approached gently to the door of the sanctuary, and learned the secret, while the high priest was instructing his master how the *Mandiram* was to be performed. He retired softly to his station. The prince came out, with the appearance of uncommon joy. He frequently afterwards retired with the favourite page to the most unfrequented parts of a neighbouring forest, and after recommending to him to sit and watch over his body, he went and repeated the *Mandiram* in private, when his soul mounted into the skies. He was so delighted with this new amusement, that he forgot his duty as a ruler; he was tired of affairs of state; he lost the relish of his former pleasures; even his beautiful princess was neglected; and, like an early lover with his mistress, he  
looked





looked impatiently for the hour when he might quit the grandeur of his court, for the sake of soaring, for a moment, above the sphere of men.—Policy has recommended to princes to be cautious in bestowing their confidence, and not to put it in the power of any one to do them an injury that may not easily be repaired. One day that the monarch was delighted in his aërial journey, he forgot to come back at the appointed time. The page grew weary with attending, and wished to return to the court. He often looked at the body, and again into the air. He thought of a variety of things to divert the tedious hour. The secret he had learnt at the door of the sanctuary, came into his mind. He who fails in his duty once, generally yields to fresh temptations. Curiosity, that led him from his station before the temple, now prompted him to repeat the *Mandiram*. The conflict was but short. The mystery was performed. The  
foul





foul instantly quitted the body of the slave. A more graceful form lay before it. The change was preferred. The slave now became the sovereign, and not chusing to have one who had been his master for an attendant, he cut off the head of his former body, as being now but a habitation for which he had no longer any use. The foul of the prince returned too late. He saw the lifeless corpse of his favourite. He guessed what had come to pass. And after floating, for some time, over the forest, and uttering those unhappy sounds, that are sometimes to be heard in the stillness of the night, he was commanded to enter into the body of a parrot. He flew instantly to his palace, where, instead of commanding, he was caught; and, for the beauty of his plumage, presented to the princess, as not unworthy of her regard. He was placed in her apartment; he saw his unfaithful servant wearing his crown, and enjoying his bed in his stead; he heard his late actions examined, his





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his faults criticised, his foibles turned into ridicule; and when, in the bitterness of impotent revenge, he repeated all the words of invective he had learnt, they only served to amuse the slaves. No one knew the secret until many ages afterwards, when it was related by a holy hermit \*.

Perhaps in no literary research we are more liable to be deceived, than in endeavouring to prove the near affinity of one nation to another, by a similitude in particular customs and opinions. But notwithstanding my diffidence of argument merely grounded upon such a foundation, from what has been even already said,

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\* The same story, which is likewise mentioned by Father Bouchet, in his letter to M. Huet, Bishop of Avranches (to be found in *Lettres edif. & cur.* tome xii. p. 170. Edit. de Paris, 1781.) undoubtedly furnished the hint to M. de Moncrif, for his late beautiful tale of *Les Ames Rivaies*. See *Oeuvres de Moncrif*, tom. ii. p. 17. Edit. Paris, 1768.

there





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there appears so near a resemblance between the mythology of the Hindoos, and that of the Egyptians and Greeks, as inclines me to believe, that they originate from one common parent. Sir William Jones says, " I am persuaded that, by means of the *Puranas*, we shall in time discover all the learning of the Egyptians, without decyphering their hieroglyphics." And I cannot but congratulate the public, on an enterprize, from which we may now reasonably expect much curious, and perhaps useful, information.





## S K E T C H      V I I I .

*Devotion and Worship of the Hindoos.*

**T**HE devotion of the Hindoos consists in going to the temples; in occasionally performing certain religious ceremonies at home; in prayers, in fastings, and other penances; in making offerings, both on their own account, and for the souls of their dead relations; in frequent ablutions, and in charities and pious works.

According to the rules of their religion, they ought to pray thrice a day—in the morning; at noon; and in the evening—*with their faces turned towards the East.* They should at the same time perform their ablutions, and when they have an opportunity, should prefer a running stream to standing





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standing water. But it is an indispensable duty to wash themselves before meals.

The offerings made at the temples generally consist of money, fruit, flowers, rice, spices, and incense. The offering on account of the dead is a cake, called Peenda; which ceremony is performed on the days of the new and full moon.

It has been asserted by some writers, that the devotion of the Hindoos was formerly sanguinary, and that even human sacrifices were offered, as the most acceptable to their gods. But the existence of such a practice appears to me extremely questionable. As far as I have investigated, the Hindoos seem to have been formerly what they are at present, mild and humane; and I know not any trace of a custom so barbarous, unless we consider in that light those voluntary sacrifices which some enthusiasts make of themselves.

It





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It is however true, that in their sacred writings mention is made of the Asmavedha Jug\*, or sacrifice of the horse; of the sacrifice of the white elephant; of the Gomedha Jug, or sacrifice of the bull; and even of the Narmedha Jug, or human sacrifice. But it must be observed, that the things represented as fit to be sacrificed, have so many peculiarities, that we may conclude they were never to be found. If they have all the requisites that are described, it is said they will immediately regenerate from their ashes in the sight of the persons present at the sacrifice; and that their failing to do so, denotes the displeasure of the Supreme Being with those who may have caused the sacrifice to be performed. Under that denunciation, and with so many difficulties, we may suppose that such sacrifices have feldom or never been made; and we are at a loss to account for their

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\* Jug, is sacrifice.

being





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being mentioned in their religious writings, unless it be to indicate, that nothing in this life is too sacred or valuable, to exempt it from being devoted to the service of the Almighty.

Yet, notwithstanding what has been here observed, impartiality, and the attention that is due to whatever may be advanced by one so well informed in Asiatic history as Sir William Jones, require, that I should quote what he has said on this subject, and which had not been seen by me till after the first edition of this work was published.

“ The last of the Greek or Italian divini-  
“ ties, for whom we find a parallel in the  
“ Pantheon of India, is the Stygian or  
“ Taurick Diana, otherwise named Hecate,  
“ and often confounded with Proserpine ;  
“ and there can be no doubt of her iden-  
“ tity with Kali, or the wife of Shiva, in  
“ his





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“ his character of the Stygian Jove. To  
“ this black goddess, with a collar of golden  
“ skulls, as we see her exhibited in all her  
“ principal temples, *human sacrifices* were  
“ anciently offered, as the Vedas enjoined ;  
“ but in the *present age* \*, they are abso-  
“ lutely prohibited, as are also the sacri-  
“ fices of bulls and horses : kids are  
“ still offered to her ; and to palliate the  
“ cruelty of the slaughter, which gave  
“ such offence to Budha, the Brahmans  
“ inculcate a belief, that the poor victims  
“ rise in the *heaven of Indra* †, where they  
“ become the musicians of his band. In-  
“ stead of the obsolete, and now *illegal*  
“ sacrifices, of a man, a bull, and a horse,  
“ called Narmedha, Gomedha, and Af-  
“ wamedha, the powers of nature are  
“ thought to be propitiated by the less

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\* We presume that Sir William Jones means the Kaly Youg.

† See page 186.





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“ bloody ceremonies at the end of autumn,  
“ when the festivals of Kali and Lechemi  
“ are solemnized nearly at the same time.  
“ Now if it be asked, how the goddesses of  
“ *Death* came to be united with the mild  
“ patronesses of *Abundance*, I must propose  
“ another question, how came Proserpine  
“ to be represented in the *European system*  
“ as the daughter of Ceres? Perhaps both  
“ questions may be answered by the pro-  
“ position of natural philosophers, that  
“ *the apparent destruction of a substance is*  
“ *the production of it in a different form.*  
“ The wild music of Kali’s priests at one  
“ of her festivals brought instantly to my  
“ recollection, the Scythian measures of  
“ Diana’s adorers in the splendid opera of  
“ *Iphigenia in Tauris*, which Gluck ex-  
“ hibited at Paris, &c.”

The sacrifice of the kid to Kali, as above-mentioned, is probably the same with that which Father Bouchet calls the *Ekiam*.





## DEVOTION AND WORSHIP. 227

He says, " The Indians have a sacrifice  
" called the *Ekiam*, where a sheep is killed;  
" the Brahmans, who are forbid to taste  
" meat at other times, are obliged, by the  
" law, to partake of the animal that has  
" been sacrificed;" and, in another place,  
" they eat certain parts of the victim, but  
" abstain from others; it is only on this  
" occasion that they taste animal food \*."

I am informed that a buffalo is likewise offered to Bawaney, at the feast of the Dohra; and these are the only instances of living sacrifices that I am acquainted with.

The worship of the Hindoos may be divided into two sorts, the *Narganey Pooja*, or worship of the invisible; and the *Sarganey Pooja*, or the worship before idols.

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\* Lettres edif. & cur. tom. xi. p. 25. Edit. ut sup.  
Id. tom. xii. p. 249.





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But the followers of the latter are by far the most numerous: the former, comparatively speaking, are but few, and in the strict sense of the expression may be termed deists. They have either retained the true meaning of their religion from the beginning, or have in later times abolished the fables of the Brahmans, and restored it to its original purity. This seems to have been a principal object with Veias in his dialogues between Krishna and Arjoon; and it appears, that even in his time, above four thousand years ago, the adoration of the true god was confounded and lost in an artful and complicated mythology\*.

At the hours of public worship the people resort to the temples. They begin their devotions by performing their ablutions at the tank, which is either to be found in

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\* See SKETCH VII. on Mythology.





## DEVOTION AND WORSHIP. 229

front of the building, or in the great temples, in the centre of the first court †. Leaving their slippers, or sandals, on the border of the tank, they are admitted to a peristyle or vestibule, opposite to the building which contains the idols, where they observe great reverence; and whilst the Brahmans perform the ceremonies of the Jug, or the Pooja, the dancing women occasionally dance in the court, singing the praises of the divinity to the sounds of various musical instruments.

The Pooja may likewise be performed at home before the household images. Those who are to assist at it begin by washing

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† Some of the temples are of an oblong figure, and consist of two or more courts, immediately following each other. Some have only one inclosure, with the chapel where the images are placed, in the center of it; and some, though few, are like the one at Seringham, having different courts within each other.





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themselves. They likewise wash the room or place destined for the ceremony; and then spread it with a new mat, or with a carpet that is only used for that purpose. On this they place *the throne* of the image, which is generally made of wood richly carved and gilt, though sometimes of gold or silver. The things necessary for the Pooja are laid upon the mat; consisting of a bell of metal; a conch shell \* to blow on; a censer filled with benzoin sugar, and other articles, which are kept constantly burning, by being occasionally renewed. Flowers separately and in garlands are scattered upon the mat. The idol is put into a metal basin, and being washed by pouring water first on the head, is wiped and placed on its throne. Cups, and plates of gold, silver, or other metals, are spread before it, some filled with rice, others with different

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\* The conch-shell is held in a sort of veneration by the Hindoos.





## DEVOTION AND WORSHIP. 231

forts of fruits, with dry sweet-meats, and with cow's milk. The worshippers repeat certain prayers and *Afblocks*, or verses in praise of the god whom the idol represents.

The Brahman, who performs the ceremony, occasionally rings the bell, and blows the shell. He gives the *Tiluk*, or mark on the forehead, to the idol, by dipping his right thumb in some substance that has been mixed with water, and prepared for that purpose. If the mark be a perpendicular one, he begins at the top of the nose, and advances upwards. But the colour, the size, and shape of the *Tiluk* depend on the tribe and sect the worshippers may be of; some tribes being marked with vermilion, others with turmeric, and some with the dust of the whitest species of sandal wood, &c. A Brahman generally marks all the persons present in the same manner. The fruit and

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other

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other articles of food that were spread before the idol, are divided amongst them; and the idol is then carefully wrapped up, and with the throne and other things used in the ceremony, kept in a secure place until another Pooja be performed.

A veneration for the elements, but especially fire and water, seem to have been common to all the ancient Eastern nations. The Medes and Persians considered fire and water as the only true images of the divinity\*; and it is evident, that the Hindoos, if they do not now worship fire, hold it in religious respect†. Every day at sun-rise the priests go to some river, or to the tanks of their temples, to perform the Sandivaney, or worship to Brahma the Supreme. After having washed themselves, taking water in the right hand, they throw

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\* Herod. i. Clem. Alex. Protrept.

† See page 188. under the article *Soun*.





## DEVOTION AND WORSHIP. 233

it in the air before and behind them, invoking the Deity, and singing forth thanksgiving and praise. They then throw some towards the Sun, expressing their gratitude for his having again appeared to dispel the darkness of the night.

Lucian says, that the Indians offered adoration to the Sun, in turning towards the east; and Philostrates observes, that they addressed prayers to him in the morning, to favour the cultivation of the earth; and in the evening, not to abandon them, but return again in the morning.

Father Bouchet says, that “ He who performs the *Ekiam* should, every morning and evening, put a piece of wood into the fire, that is employed for that sacrifice, and take care to prevent it from being extinguished.”

Mr. Wilkins informs us, that the Brahmans are enjoined to light up a fire at certain times,





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times, which must be produced by the friction of two pieces of wood of a particular kind; that with a fire thus procured, their sacrifices are burnt; the nuptial altar flames; and the funeral pile is kindled.

In the Heetopades it is said: "Fire is  
" the superior of the Brahmans; the Brah-  
" man is the superior of the tribes; the  
" husband is the superior of women; but  
" the stranger is the superior of all."





## S K E T C H IX.

*Devotees.*

IN every part of Hindostan we meet with numbers of devotees, distinguished by various names, but not restricted to any cast. They become such from choice, and every Hindoo, except the Chandalah, is at liberty to adopt this mode of life.

Of all the numerous classes of devotees, none are so much respected as the Saniaffies and Yogeys. They quit their relations, and every concern of this life, and wander about the country without any fixed abode.

It is said, in their sacred writings, "That  
" a Saniaffy, or he who shall devote him-  
" self to a solitary religious life, shall have  
" no





“ no other clothing, but what may be ne-  
“ cessary to cover his nakedness; nor any  
“ other worldly goods but a staff in his  
“ hand, and a pitcher to drink out of.  
“ That he shall always meditate on the  
“ truths contained in the sacred writings,  
“ but never argue on them. That his food  
“ shall be confined to rice, and other  
“ vegetables; and that he shall eat but once  
“ a-day, and then sparingly. That he shall  
“ look forward with desire to the separa-  
“ tion of the soul from the body; be in-  
“ different about heat, or cold, or hunger,  
“ or praise, or reproach, or any thing con-  
“ cerning this life; and that unless he  
“ strictly follow these rules, and subdue  
“ his passions, he will only be more  
“ criminal, by embracing a state, the du-  
“ ties of which he could not perform, ne-  
“ glecting those he was born to observe.”

With the precise distinction between the  
Yogey and the Saniaffy, I am unacquainted.  
The former in Sanscrit, signifies a devout  
person;





person ; the latter, one who has entirely forsaken the things of this world. It is said in the dialogues between Krishna and Arjoon,

“ Learn, son of Pandoo, that what they  
“ call *Sanias*, or a forsaking of the world,  
“ is the same with *Yog*, or the practice of  
“ devotion.

“ The man who is happy in his heart,  
“ at rest in his mind, and enlightened  
“ within, is a *Yogey*, or one devoted to  
“ God, of a godly spirit, and obtaineth  
“ the immaterial nature of *Brabm* the  
“ Supreme.

“ The man who keepeth the outward  
“ accidents from entering the mind, and  
“ his eyes fixed in contemplation between  
“ his brows ; who maketh the breath pass  
“ equally through his nostrils, who hath set  
“ his heart upon salvation, and who is  
“ free from lust, fear, or anger, is for ever  
“ blessed in this life.”

“ He





“He cannot be a *Yogey*, who, in his actions, hath not abandoned all views.”

“The *Yogey* constantly exerciseth the spirit in private. He is of a subdued mind, free from hope. He planteth his feat firmly on a spot that is neither too high nor too low, and fitteth on the sacred grafs that is called *Koos*, covered with a skin, or cloth.—There he, whose business is the restraining of his passions, should sit, in the exercise of devotion, for the purification of his soul, keeping his head, his neck, and his body steady, without motion, his eyes fixed on the point of his nose, looking at nothing else around. The *Yogey* of a subdued mind, thus employed, in the exercise of devotion, is as a lamp standing in a place without wind, which waveth not.”

“Supreme happiness attendeth him whose mind is thus at peace, whose carnal affections and passions are subdued, and who is in God, and free from sin.”

“The





“ The man whose mind is endued with  
“ devotion, beholdeth the supreme foul  
“ in all things, and all things in the su-  
“ preme foul.”

“ The *Yogey* who believeth in unity, and  
“ worshippeth me present in all things,  
“ dwelleth in me.”

“ This divine discipline which is called  
“ *Yog*, is hard to be attained by him who  
“ hath not his foul in subjection, but it may  
“ be acquired by him who taketh pains.”

“ The *Yogey* is more exalted than the  
“ *Tapasivees*, those zealots who harass them-  
“ selves in performing penances.”

“ He is both a *Yogey* and a *Saniasy* who  
“ doeth that which he hath to do, inde-  
“ pendent of the fruit thereof.”

“ Works are said to be the means by  
“ which a man may require devotion, so  
“ rest is called the means for him who hath  
“ attained devotion.”

“ When





“ When the all-contemplative *Sainasy* is  
“ not engaged with objects of the senses,  
“ nor in works, then he is called one who  
“ hath attained devotion.”

“ The soul of the conquered placid spirit,  
“ is the same in heat and in cold, in pain  
“ and in pleasure, in honour and disgrace.”

“ The man whose mind is replete with  
“ divine wisdom and learning, who stand-  
“ eth on the pinnacle, and hath subdued his  
“ passions, is said to be devout\*.”

It is not improbable that some of the passages in the sacred writings which were enigmatical, being understood literally by the ignorant, have given rise to those extravagant penances, with which some of the devotees torture themselves. In one of the above quotations they seem even to

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\* *Bhagvat Geeta*. The above quotations, as well as others, are not taken in the exact order in which they follow in the work, but are selected from different parts, as they suit the subject treated of.





be condemned; the *Yogey* being said to be more exalted than the *Tapasivee*, &c. I saw one of the latter, who having made a vow to keep his arms constantly extended over his head, with his hands clasped together, they were become withered and immoveable. Not long ago, one of them finished measuring the distance between Benares and Jaggernaut with his body, by alternately stretching himself upon the ground, and rising; which, if he performed it as faithfully as he pretended, must have taken years to accomplish. Some make vows to keep their arms crossed over their breast for the rest of their days; others to keep their hands for ever shut, and their nails are sometimes seen growing through the back of the hand; some by their own desire, are chained to a particular spot, and others never lie down, but sleep leaning against a tree \*.

There

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\* *Philosophos eorum quos Gymnosophistas vocant, ab exortu ad occasum perstare contuentes solem immobilibus*





There are frequent instances of devotees and penitents throwing themselves under the wheels of the chariots \* of Shivah or Vishnou, when the idol is drawn out to celebrate the feast of a temple, and being thereby crushed to death: and not long since we saw an account of the aged father of a numerous offspring, who devoted himself to the flames, to appease the wrath of a divinity, who, as he imagined, had for some time past afflicted his family and neighbours with a mortal epidemical disease.

The *Pandarams*, on the coast of Coromandel, are followers of Shivah; they rub their faces and bodies with the ashes of burnt cow-dung, and go about the towns and villages singing the praises of their God.

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*oculis, ferventibus arenis toto die alternis pedibus insistere.*  
Plin. lib. vii. cap. 2.—*Gymnosophists* was a name given by the Greeks, on account of their going naked, or probably from their not wearing an upper garment.

\* These chariots are more properly great moveable towers, which require many oxen and some hundreds of men to draw them.





The *Cary-patry-pandarams* are a set of religious persons, who make a vow never to speak; they go to the doors of houses, and demand charity, by striking their hands together. They take nothing but rice, which is given them ready prepared for eating; and, if it be sufficient to satisfy their hunger, they pass the rest of the day sitting in the shade, and scarcely looking at any object that may come before them.

The *Tadinums* go about begging, and singing the history of the different incarnations of Vishnou. They beat a kind of tabor; and have small brass bells tied round their ankles, which make a considerable noise as they walk along.

These devotees are to be met with in every part of Hindostan; but chiefly in the neighbourhood of great temples, both from religious motives, and in order to receive alms from the pilgrims who resort thither.

Contrary to the practice of the Hindoos in general, many of them wear their hair,

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and,





and, by frequently rubbing it with the oil of the cocoa-nut, it grows to an extraordinary degree of length and thickness. Some let it hang loose on their bodies, extending to the ground; others have it plaited in many tresses, and wound round the head in the form of a great turban.

Most of the ancient authors who have mentioned India and its inhabitants, seem to have confounded the Devotees, Sectaries, and *Pundits*, or Philosophers, with the Brachmanes, or regular priesthood. They speak of *Gymnosophists*, *Germanes*, *Pramnes*, *Samaniens*, and *Hilobiens*, who are said to be a class of the *Samaniens*, that lived in forests, and used no clothing or nourishment but what the trees afforded them.

Strabo says, that the *Samaniens* set no value on any knowledge but such as tended to correct vice, and that they smiled at those who applied themselves to metaphysics, astronomy, and astrology.—Probably

Strabo





Strabo meant such of the *Samaniens* as were *solitaries*, or hermits; for we find that the *Samaniens* in general were remarked for their learning, and their knowledge in the sciences.

Clement of Alexandria observes, that there were two classes of Indian philosophers, the one called *Brachmanes*, the other *Sarmanes*; by which, I am inclined to think they mean the *Samaniens*. He says some of the *Sarmanes* were called *solitaries*, and neither lived in towns nor had any particular dwelling; that they observed celibacy; and covered their nakedness with the bark of trees; nourished themselves with their fruit; and drank only water, and that out of the palms of their hands,

Porphyry acquaints us, that the substance of the doctrines of the Indians consisted in the necessity of adoring God with a pure and pious mind; that the *Samaniens*, who secluded themselves from the world, insisted





on the necessity of subduing the passions, in order to be fit to approach God; and gave that as the reason for the extraordinary penances they inflicted upon themselves, *thereby to render the body entirely submissive to the spirit*.

M. de la Croze says, that the *Samaniens* are still spoken of with respect, so far as regards their learning; but that their doctrines were held in abhorrence by the Brahmans, and that their sect no longer exists. He speaks of several of their literary performances. The title of one is *Tolkabians*, from its author, who is said to have been a Hindoo Rajah; we are told, it is very voluminous, and amongst other things contains the art and rules of Hindoo poetry. M. Ziegenbalg observes, that to understand it thoroughly, required long and arduous application.—Another work, called *Diva-garam*, which treats of language and *the choice of words*, is put into the hands of boys who  
are





are destined to pursue learning, and is held in the highest esteem by their literati, but the style is so exalted as to be entirely above the comprehension of the vulgar.

Calanus \*, who burnt himself in the presence of Alexander and his officers, has by some been called a Brahman;—but it is evident that he was one of those devotees

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\* We are told that he was so named by the Greeks, from his saying *Cale*, by way of salutation. They likewise called him Sphínés, which probably was no more his true name than the other. He was regarded by his countrymen as an apostate.—He followed Alexander; at Pafargadus, being attacked with a dysentery, he ordered a funeral pile to be prepared, and having performed his ablutions, sacrifices, and prayers, laid himself composedly down, and was burnt to death.

PLUT. *Vit. Alex.*

Strabo mentions a person who had accompanied ambassadors sent by a prince of India to Augustus, that burnt himself at Athens; and says, the Athenians erected a monument to his memory, with this inscription, “To Zarmonachigas, Indian of Bergafes, who voluntarily embraced death, according to the custom of his country.”

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who





who travel about the country.—He is said to have gone naked; but the Brahmans neither go naked, nor commit any acts of extravagance. Their lives are uniform, indolent but decent; and chiefly occupied with their rites and ceremonies, they apply more or less to study, according to their genius and turn of mind.

But notwithstanding this inaccuracy of ancient authors, in confounding the Brahmans, or regular priesthood, with the devotees and sectaries; if we consider how limited their intercourse with India was, compared to that enjoyed by modern Europeans, and how little we ourselves knew of its inhabitants till within these few years past, we shall find cause, instead of being shocked with their errors, to be surprised at their instruction, and perhaps ashamed of our own supineness. Strabo observes, that those who had been in India, generally had seen things but partially, and by the way; that they had taken their information by  
hear-say,





hearsay, which, however, had not prevented their giving accounts as if they had examined with accuracy \*.

Some are of opinion, that the extravagant notions of the *illuminated* and *quietists*, that have figured among the Christians, and that still exist in different parts of Europe, came originally from the devotees of Hindostan. D'Herbelot says, "The sect of the *Illuminés* had its origin in the East; "it was brought by the Arabs into Spain, "under the name of *Alumbrados*, and has "been renewed in our days by Doctor "Molinos †."

But, besides the route given to this sect by D'Herbelot, we find that similar opinions with those of the *Illuminés*, were professed in the eleventh century, by Simeon, superior of a monastery of Saint Mamas in Constantinople, and were embraced by Pa-

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\* Strabo, 15.

† Bib. Orient. par D'Herbelot, p. 296. fol.

lamas,





lamas, bishop of Salonica. They appeared in the Latin church in the fourteenth century, and broke out and made great progress in the seventeenth, being professed and taught by Molinos, who is considered as the chief of the *Quietists* of the west.

Simeon and others pretended, that, by abstracting themselves from the things of this world, they might, while in a state of such abstraction, and absorbed in the contemplation of God, be received into grace, and partake of the divine essence.—That they then composed a sort of Trinity within themselves, of the body, the soul, and the holy spirit.—While in the practice of contemplation, it was recommended to the disciples, to sit with their chin upon their breast, the eyes fixed on the navel; and they pretended that when they were inspired with the Divine Spirit, they felt it pass through their nostrils, and were affected with peculiarly delightful sensations.—But beside the absurdity of those monstrous doctrines,





doctrines, which, it might be supposed, would have been sufficient to draw on them the contempt of all reasonable men, it was alleged, that the disciples of Molinos, trusting for their salvation to those exercises of *absorption*, were often engaged in scenes of the most licentious debauchery. They were called *Quietists*, from affecting an extraordinary tranquility of mind; and however strange it may appear, many of high rank of both sexes, and persons distinguished for their learning, were Quietists. The friend of the celebrated Madame de Maintenon openly professed herself to be of the number; nor is he even exempt from suspicion of having adopted many of the opinions of Molinos.





## S K E T C H X.

*Learning and Philosophy of the Brahmins.*

ALL the ancient sacred and profane writings of the Hindoos are in the Sanskrit language, which is now only known to the *Pundits* \*, or men of learning; and is neither spoken nor understood by the rest of the nation. Yet as Sanskrit words are still found in use over the whole peninsula; and as most of the proper names of persons and ancient places are derived from that language, it is not improbable,

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\* Pundit is a Sanskrit word, and an honorary title, signifying doctor or philosopher.

Mr. Wilkins informs us, that Sanskrit is composed from *San*, a preposition, signifying completion, and *skrita*, done or finished.

that





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that it was once universal, however remote that period may be.

If we compare the Brahmans of the present day with the *Brachmanes* \* of antiquity, we shall, in almost every feature of their character, perceive the strongest resemblance. The difference that may exist between them, may partly have insensibly taken place in the lapse of time ; but must chiefly be ascribed to the revolutions that have happened in their government.

The ancient Brahmans, living in an age when the Hindoo empire flourished, cultivated science with an encouragement of which their oppressed posterity are deprived. Beside the study of the sacred, moral, and metaphysical writings of their nation, a principal part of their scientific pursuits seems to have been directed to

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\* The words are evidently the same, and derive their origin from Brahma, God.

astronomy,





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astronomy, natural philosophy, and some branches of mathematics.

Several ancient authors, in speaking of the philosophers of India, say, that they occupied themselves with things of a serious nature; in the contemplation of God and his works; that they spoke little, and seldom without necessity, yet never refused to answer those who came to them to be instructed\*: that their discourse was concise, sententious, often allegorical, and that they sometimes used enigmas †.

Nearchus, who commanded Alexander's fleet, said, that they only respected truth and virtue ‡.

Strabo informs us, that they cultivated natural philosophy and astronomy.

They were held in so high repute for their maxims of morality, and for their

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\* Strabo, 15. Porphy. de Abst. 4.

† Diog. Laer. Proëm.

‡ Strabo, *ibid.*

know-





knowledge in science and philosophy, that, besides Pythagoras, many went from Greece and other more eastern countries, purposely to be instructed by them. Such were, Democrites the Abderian, Pyrrhon, &c. \* — Bardefanes of Babylon, who lived in the time of Alexander Severus, is said to have conversed with the Brachmanes, whom he represented as chiefly occupied in the adoration of God, and the duties of morality †.

Great affinity appears between the manners and practices of the Brahmans and those Gymnosophists of Ethiopia, who settled near the sources of the Nile; and, according to Philostrates, they were descended from the Brahmans. He says, the Gymnosophists of Ethiopia came from India, having been driven from thence for the murder of their king near the Ganges ‡. He makes

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\* Suidas.—Diog. Laert.

† S. Jerom. Porph.

‡ Philost. Vit. Apoll. c. 6.





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Pythagoras say to Thespesion, in reproaching him for his improper complaisance to the Egyptians, "Admirer as you are of the  
" philosophy which the Indians invented,  
" why do you not attribute it to its real pa-  
" rents, rather than to those who are only so  
" by adoption? Why ascribe to the Egyptians  
" a thing as absurd, as to assert that the  
" waters of the Nile, mixed with milk,  
" (which they pretend happened formerly,)  
" flowed back to their first source."—Iarchas, likewise, says to Apollonius, on asking his opinion concerning the soul:  
" We think of it what Pythagoras taught  
" you, and what we taught the Egyp-  
" tians \*."

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\* Philost. de Vit. Apoll. c. 6. He probably meant the people of the Thebaid, as the opinions of those of lower Egypt, with respect to the Supreme Being, appear in general to have been very different from the tenets of the Hindoos. Some said, that the soul after death descended to a subterraneous place, where it for ever remained; others, that it ascended to the stars, whence it originally came.





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Lucian observes, that the science of astronomy came from Ethiopia—perhaps, therefore, from these Gymnosophists who came originally from Indostan—And in making philosophy complain to Jupiter of some who had dishonoured her by their conduct, he supposes the Indians to have been the first instructed by her. She says, “I went  
“amongst the Indians, and made them  
“come down from their elephants and converse with me.—From them I went to  
“the Ethiopians, and then came to the  
“Egyptians.”—LUCIAN.

But though the Brahmans now may be inferior to their ancestors, as philosophers and men of science, their *cast* is still the only repository of the literature that yet remains: to them alone is entrusted the education of youth; they are the sole interpreters of the law, and the only expounders of their religion.

Bernier, in his letter, dated 4th October 1667, gives the following account of their literary pursuits at that time.

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S

“La





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“ La ville de Benares, est l'école generale,  
“ et comme l'Athenes de toute la gentilité  
“ des Indes, où les Brahmens et les Reli-  
“ gieux, qui sont ceux qui s'appliquent à  
“ l'étude, se rendent. Ils n'ont point de  
“ Colleges ni de classes ordonnées, comme  
“ chez nous ; cela me semble plus tenir de  
“ cette façon d'école des anciens, les maitres  
“ étant dispersés par la ville dans leur  
“ maisons, et principalement dans les Jar-  
“ dins des Fauxbourgs, ou les gros mar-  
“ chands les souffrent. De ces maitres les  
“ uns ont quatre disciples, les autres six ou  
“ sept, et les plus renommés, douze ou  
“ quinze tout au plus, qui passent les dix et  
“ les douze années avec eux. Toute cette  
“ étude est fort froide, parceque la plupart  
“ des Indiens sont d'une humeur lente et  
“ paresseuse ; la chaleur du pays et leur  
“ manger y contribuant beaucoup.

“ Leur premiere étude est sur le Han-  
“ scrit \*, qui est une langue tout à fait  
“ differente de l'Indienne ordinaire et qui

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\* Or Sanskrit.

“ n'est



OF THE BRAHMANS.

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“ n'est sue que des Pundits. Elle s'appelle  
 “ Hanscrit, qui veut dire langue pure, et  
 “ parcequ'ils tiennent que ce fut dans cette  
 “ langue que Dieu, par le moyen de Brah-  
 “ ma \*, leur publia les quatre † Beths qu'ils  
 “ estiment livres sacrés ; ils l'appellent lan-  
 “ gue fainte et divine : ils prétendent  
 “ même qu'elle est aussi ancienne que Brah-  
 “ ma, dont ils ne comptent l'âge que par  
 “ Lecques, ou centaines de mille ans ; mais  
 “ je voudrois caution de cette étrange an-  
 “ tiquité. Quoiqu'il en soit, on ne sauroit  
 “ nier, ce me semble, qu'elle ne soit très an-  
 “ cienne, puisque leurs livres de religion,  
 “ qui l'est sans doute beaucoup, ne sont  
 “ écrits que dans cette langue, et que de  
 “ plus, elle a ses autres de philosophie, la  
 “ médecine en vers, quelques autres poésies  
 “ et quantité d'autres livres, dont j'ai vu  
 “ une grande sale toute pleine dans Benares.

“ Apres qu'ils ont appris le Hanscrit, ce  
 “ qui leur est très difficile, parcequ'ils n'ont

\* He means Brimha.

† Veds.





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“ point de grammaire qui vaille, ils se met-  
“ tent pour l'ordinaire à lire le Purane, qui  
“ est comme un interprete et abregé des  
“ Beths, parceque ces Beths sont fort gros,  
“ du moins si ce sont ceux qu'on me mon-  
“ tra à Benares : ils sont même très rares ;  
“ jusques-là que mon Agah ne les a jamais  
“ pu trouver à acheter, quelque diligence  
“ qu'il ait pu faire ; aussi les tiennent ils fort  
“ secrets, de crainte que les Mahometans  
“ ne mettent la main dessus, et ne les fassent  
“ bruler, comme ils ont déjà fait plusieurs  
“ fois.

“ Entre leurs philosophes il y en a prin-  
“ cipalement six fort fameux, qui sont six  
“ sectes différentes. Les uns s'attachent à  
“ celle ci, et les autres à celle là, ce qui  
“ fait de la difference, et cause même de la  
“ jalousie entre les Pundets, ou docteurs ;  
“ car ils savent qu'un tel est de cette secte,  
“ et un tel d'une autre, et chacun d'eux  
“ pretend que sa doctrine est bien meilleure  
“ que celles des autres, et qu'elle est même  
“ plus conforme aux Beths.

“ Tous





“ Tous ces livres parlent des premiers  
“ principes des choses, mais fort diffé-  
“ rent. Les uns tiennent que tout est  
“ composé des petits corps, qui sont indivi-  
“ sibles, non pas à cause de leur solidité,  
“ dureté, et résistance, mais à raison de  
“ leur petitesse, et disent ainsi plusieurs  
“ choses ensuite *qui approchent des opinions*  
“ *de Democrite et d'Epicure.*

“ Les autres disent, que tout est com-  
“ posé de matière et de forme, mais pas un  
“ d'eux ne s'explique nettement sur la ma-  
“ tière, et bien moins encore sur la forme.”

“ D'autres veulent que tout soit composé  
“ des quatre éléments et du néant.

“ Il y en a aussi qui veulent que la lu-  
“ mière et les ténèbres soient les premiers  
“ principes.

“ Il y en a encore qui admettent pour  
“ principe la privation, ou plutôt les pri-  
“ vations, qu'ils distinguent du néant.





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“ Il y en a enfin qui prétendent que  
“ tout est composé d'accidens.

“ Touchant ces principes en general,  
“ ils sont tous d'accord qu'ils sont éter-  
“ nels.”

The Hindoos, like some of the ancients, suppose that the soul is an emanation of the spirit of God breathed into mortals. But their manner of expressing this idea is more sublime; for, instead of calling it a portion of the divine spirit, they compare it to the heat and light sent forth from the sun, which neither lessens nor divides his own essence: to the speech that communicates knowledge, without lessening that of him who instructs the ignorant: to a torch at which other torches are lighted, without its light being thereby diminished, &c.

Some of the philosophers not only believe that the souls of mankind are emanations  
of





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of the *divine spirit*, but that the Sun, the Moon, with the other planets, and all the bodies that are scattered in the infinity of space, are pervaded, and made to exist by this spirit. These opinions are by no means peculiar to the Hindoos, but seem to have been entertained by the Chaldeans, the Persians, and many of the philosophers of Greece and Italy \*.

Others giving still greater scope to the imagination, profess the doctrine of *Illusion*. They say nothing really exists in an individual sense, because the universe, and every thing contained in it, is only one, *it is God*, all things being emanations from the first principle. And it is necessary to attend to this doctrine, in order to comprehend many passages in their different authors which refer to it.

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\* Diog. Laert. in Pyth.—Plato in Tim.—Idem in Epin.—Cicero de Nat. Deor.





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Gowtama \*, an ancient author of a metaphysical work, called *Nayaya-darsana*, makes a distinction between what he calls the divine soul, and the vital soul. The first, he says, is eternal, immaterial, and indivisible; resembling in that respect the great Spirit from whence it came: and he thinks it would be monstrous to imagine, that this essence or spirit should be affected by the passions to which mankind is subject. The second, he says, is a subtle element, which pervades all animated things; and he observes, that it would be as absurd to suppose that desire or passions of any kind could exist in organized matter only, as to suppose they could exist in a piece of mechanism that was the work of human ingenuity. Taking it then for

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\* This author is well known to the learned Brahmans. He is mentioned in the Heetopades as a prophet; and the late Colonel Dow tells us, that he deposited a copy of one of the volumes of his work in the British Museum,

granted,





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granted, that mankind partake in a certain degree of the spirit of God, which is not liable to human passions; and that organized matter, merely as such, cannot possess any; the vital soul, or pervading element, is that which gives birth to our desires.

In speaking of man, he mentions, besides the five external senses of seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, and feeling, *one internal sense*; by which we presume he means intellectual perception.

He says, that the external senses convey into the mind distinct representations of things; and thereby furnish it with materials for its internal operations; but that unless the mind act in conjunction with the senses, their operation is lost.—Thus, for instance, a person in deep contemplation is frequently insensible to sound, nor does he perceive an object that is immediately before his eyes.—That ideas acquired by means of the external senses, produce





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produce new ideas by the internal operation of the mind, and have also the power of exciting sensations of pain or pleasure.

Reason, he says, is the faculty that enables us to conclude (from what falls under our immediate observation) upon things at the time not perceptible; as, when we see smoke, we know that it proceeds from fire.—Reason, he continues, depends on our ideas, and is in proportion to the nature and extent of them; and therefore, wherever our ideas are indistinct, our reason must be imperfect.

By perception, he says, we have an immediate knowledge of things in a certain degree, without the aid of reason; as of a horse, a tree, of hard or soft, sweet or bitter, hot or cold.

He then goes into a discussion of inference; takes notice of true and false inferences, and of things that can be demonstrated, and of those that cannot.

Memory,





Memory, which he seems to take in a very comprehensive sense, and almost to confound with imagination, may, he says, be employed on things present as to time, but absent as to place; on things past, and on things in *expectation*. He calls memory, the repository of knowledge, from which ideas already acquired, may be occasionally revived and called into action.

In speaking of letters, he says, by that heavenly invention a certain signification being given to figures and characters, the sight of them serves to revive ideas that have been neglected, or were not in action; as well as to convey others we are unacquainted with.—By these, he says, we may increase our knowledge by contemplative experience; by these the actions and discoveries, and learning of men in remote ages, have been transmitted to us: by these the virtues or vices of those of our own times will be transmitted to posterity;





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terity; and by these we may converse with those we love, however far they may be removed from us.—He then invokes Serafwaty, the goddess of science, by whom they are supposed to have been invented.

Treating of duration, he says, that as we cannot have an idea of its beginning or end, it cannot in its extent be brought within our comprehension:—that the duration, which is obvious to our conception, by means of motion and succession, is the space between one event and another; as the space from the first appearance of the sun in the morning till he disappears in the evening; and from his disappearing till he appears again; which definite space is called time:—that men having invented a mode of measuring time, or parts of duration, applied it to measure the revolutions of the planets, from whence proceeded the divisions of time, called years, months, and days, without which invention our knowledge would be confused, and history unintelligible.

He





He seems to hint at the folly of conjectures about the beginning or duration of the world. But as this, we presume, would not be orthodox with the Brahmans, his sentiments on that subject are so expressed, as to leave great latitude for explanation.

In speaking of the order of nature, as established by the Supreme Being, he observes, that it universally reigns in all his works;—that he therein shows us, that nothing can be produced without a first cause;—and he asks, what is chance, or accident, but a thing of momentary existence, yet always produced by a preceding cause?

In treating of providence and free-will, he supposes, that the Supreme Being, having established the order of nature, leaves her to proceed in her operations, and man to act under the impulse of his desires, restrained and conducted by his reason.—The brutes, he says, act by that impulse only, and employ their natural force or activity simply in the state they were given

to





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to them.—But that man, by means of his mental faculties, governs the fiercest animals, employs the strongest and swiftest for his use, discovers the nature and qualities of every thing the earth produces, and invents mechanic powers far exceeding natural force.—He then goes on to shew, that these qualities must proceed from some great and invisible principle, which God has not imparted to the brute creation, and whose existence must be separate from the vital soul, and independent of organized matter.—He observes, that this can no more be doubted, than it can be doubted that the elephant is stronger than the deer, or the deer swifter than the tortoise; but to ask why it should be so, or how it is, would perhaps be impious, and as absurd as to inquire why God created many of the animals which inhabit the earth, or of the fishes that live in the waters.—That we can never be sufficiently grateful for the portion of that spirit he has given us, comparatively limited as it may be;





be ; that having left us unacquainted with the extent of it, we still go on in our researches, in the hope of acquiring farther knowledge, and of making fresh discoveries ; and that, by a proper use of it, we may raise our minds above the things of this world, and render ourselves superior to its events.—

Treating of a future state, he says, that such as during their abode on earth have persevered in the practice of piety and virtue, have worshipped God purely from gratitude, love, and admiration, and have done good, without being induced either by the fear of punishment, or the hope of reward, will not stand in need of being purified in *Naraka*, or of again coming into this world to occupy other forms, but will be immediately admitted to celestial happiness.—

This may sufficiently serve as a specimen of the reasoning of this ingenious Hindoo philosopher.





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But besides Gowtama, many others believe that mankind have two souls, the one *divine*, being an emanation from God; the other the *sensitive soul*, which envelopes the former \*, and is placed between it and the matter of which the body is composed.

Some, like Pythagoras, suppose that the souls of animals are endowed with reason, and that if they do not always act like reasonable creatures, it is owing to the nature and organization of their bodies. Porphyry, who alleged that not only animals but plants had souls, said, that the soul did not think or operate in all things in the same manner, but according to the matter with which it was connected.—In plants it was the *germe*, in animals *intellect*.

In the dialogue already quoted from the Bhagvat-Geeta, between Krishna and Arjoun, Krishna says,

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\* Vid. *Hist. des Dieux Orient.*

“ Know





“ Know that every thing which is pro-  
“ duced in nature, results from the union  
“ of *Keshtra* and *Keshtragna*, matter and  
“ spirit.

“ Learn that *Prakrity*, nature, and  
“ *Pouroush*, are without beginning.

“ *Pouroush*, is that superior being who is  
“ called *Maheswar*, the great god, the most  
“ high spirit.

“ *Karma* is that emanation, from which  
“ proceedeth the generation of natural  
“ beings.

“ As the all-moving *Akash* \*, from the  
“ minuteness of its parts, passeth every  
“ where unaffected, even so the omnipo-  
“ tent spirit remaineth in the body unaf-  
“ fected. And as the sun illumines the  
“ world, even so doth the spirit enlighten  
“ the body. They who with the eye of

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\* *Akash* comes nearest to the *ether* of Professor Euler, being more subtle than air.





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“ wisdom perceive the body and the spirit  
“ to be distinct, and that there is a final  
“ release from the animal nature, go to the  
“ supreme.

“ These bodies, which envelope the souls  
“ that inhabit them, are declared to be  
“ finite beings. The soul is not a thing of  
“ which a man may say, it hath been, or  
“ is about to be, or is to be hereafter; for it  
“ is a thing without birth, constant and  
“ eternal, and is not to be destroyed. As  
“ a man throweth away old garments and  
“ putteth on new, even so the soul. The  
“ weapon divideth it not, the fire burneth  
“ it not, the wind drieth it not; for it is  
“ indivisible, inconsumable, incorruptible,  
“ and is not to be dried away. There-  
“ fore believing it to be thus, thou shouldst  
“ not grieve.

“ It is even a portion of myself, that in  
“ this world is the universal spirit of all  
“ things. It draweth together the five  
“ senses,





“ senses, and the *mind*, which is the sixth,  
“ and *Ešwar* \*, presideth over them. The  
“ foolish see it not, but those who indus-  
“ triously apply their minds to meditation,  
“ may perceive this.

“ There are three *Goun* arising from  
“ *Prakṛity*; *Satwa*, truth; *Raja*, passion;  
“ and *Tama*, darkness. The *Satwa Goun*  
“ is clear, and entwineth the soul with  
“ sweet and pleasant consequences. The  
“ love of riches, intemperance, and inordi-  
“ nate desires, are produced by the pre-  
“ valency of the *Raja Goun*; and sottish-  
“ ness, idleness, gloominess, and distrac-  
“ tion of thought are the tokens of the  
“ *Tama Goun*. If the mortal frame be  
“ dissolved whilst the *Satwa* prevaieth, the  
“ soul proceedeth to the regions of those  
“ beings who are acquainted with the  
“ Most High. But if it be dissolved, whilst

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\* One of the names of the Supreme Being.





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“ the *Raja* prevaiileth, the foul is born again  
“ in one of those who are attached to the  
“ fruits of their actions. And in like  
“ manner, if it be diffolved while the *Tama*  
“ is predominant, it is conveyed into some  
“ irrational being.

“ He who conceiveth *Pouroush* and  
“ *Prakrity*, together with the *Goun*, to be  
“ even as I have described them, is not  
“ again subject to mortal birth.

“ Those who constantly watch over  
“ their inordinate desires, are no longer  
“ confounded in their minds, and ascend  
“ to that place which endureth for ever.  
“ Neither the sun, nor the moon, nor the  
“ fire, enlighteneth that place which is the  
“ supreme mansion of my abode.

“ He, my servant, who serving me  
“ alone with due attention, has overcome  
“ the influence of the *Raja* and *Tama Goun*,  
“ is





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“ is formed to be absorbed in Brahm the  
“ Supreme.

“ There are who know not what it is to  
“ proceed in virtue, or recede from vice ;  
“ nor is veracity, or the practice of good, to  
“ be found in them. They say, the world  
“ is without beginning and without end,  
“ and without an *Eswar*, and that all  
“ things are conceived by the junction of  
“ the sexes. But these lost souls having  
“ fixed on this vision, are hypocrites,  
“ overwhelmed with madness and intoxi-  
“ cation. Because of their folly, they adopt  
“ false doctrines ; they abide by their in-  
“ conceivable opinions, and determine in  
“ their minds, that the gratification of the  
“ sensual appetites is supreme happiness.  
“ Confounded with various thoughts and  
“ designs, and being firmly attached to  
“ their lusts, they sink at last into the  
“ *Narak* of impurity. Wherefore I cast  
“ down those evil spirits, who thus despise

T 3

“ me ;





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“ me ; and being doomed to the wombs of  
“ *Afoors* \* from birth to birth, and not  
“ finding me, they go into the infernal  
“ regions.”

There is a passage in the above quotation from the Bhagvat Geeta, which seems evidently to allude to Atheists. “ There are  
“ who know not what it is to proceed in  
“ virtue, or recede from vice,” &c.—It is said that Atheists are still to be found in Hindostan ; and it appears, by a variety of testimonies, that a sect now exists, which professes doctrines nearly the same as those that were taught by Epicurus.

Father Martin, a jesuit missionary, says, in a letter from Marava, “ I forgot to re-  
“ ply to your Reverence’s question, whe-  
“ ther there are any Atheists among these

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\* Demons, or evil spirits.

“ people,





## OF THE BRAHMANS.

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“ people. I can only inform you, that  
“ there is a sect called *Nektagher*, that seems  
“ to acknowledge no divinity; but it has  
“ but few partisans, and, generally speak-  
“ ing, all the people of India adore a  
“ deity\*.”

De la Croze observes, “ Atheists are to  
“ be met with in India, though the num-  
“ ber is indeed very small; and those men  
“ of letters who denied that there were  
“ any, were misinformed.—M. Ziegenbalg  
“ mentions a book named *Karaneivaroubba*  
“ *Tarein Valamadel*, in which Atheism is  
“ openly professed. According to the  
“ sentiments of the Malabars, this work  
“ is the production of a Pagan, and the  
“ reading of it is strictly prohibited †.”

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\* Lettres edif. & cur. tome xi. p. 252. Edit. ut  
suprà.

† Hist. du Christ. des Indes, tom. ii. p. 324. Edit.  
ut suprà.





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De la Croze speaks of another book found among M. Ziegenbalg's Malabar manuscripts, called *Tebiva-paikkiam*, or the *Felicity of Life*, which he says is written in verse, and contains most excellent maxims of morality. The author, who is known by other poetical works, professed no particular worship, but maintained that the happiness of mankind depended on the practice of virtue. He left many proselytes, whose descendants, even at this day, have a total indifference about religion: they regard the Christian and the Hindoo exactly in the same manner; and M. Ziegenbalg observes, that he had many fruitless arguments with them, as they remained firm in their opinions.

It has been asserted by some writers, that the Hindoos believe in predestination; and there are several circumstances, as well as passages in some of their authors, which seem to give weight to that opinion. But, upon





upon farther enquiry, it appears, that it is contrary to the principles of their religion; and wherever this belief has obtained, it would be considered as the private notion of individuals, unwarranted by the established doctrines.

The philosopher and Brahman, *Vishnoo-Sarma*, says in the *Heetopades* : “ It has  
“ been said, that the determined fate of all  
“ things inevitably happeneth ; and that  
“ whatever is decreed must come to pass.  
“ But such are the idle sentiments of certain  
“ men. Whilst a man confideth in Pro-  
“ vidence, he should not slacken his own  
“ endeavours ; for without labour he can-  
“ not obtain oil from the seed.

“ They are weak men who declare fate  
“ to be the sole cause.

“ It is said, that fate is nothing but the  
“ consequence of deeds committed in a  
“ former state of existence ; wherefore it  
“ behoveth





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“ behoveth a man diligently to exert the  
“ powers he is possessed of.

“ As the potter formeth the lump of clay  
“ into whatever shape he liketh, even so  
“ may a man regulate his own actions.

“ Good fortune is the offspring of our  
“ endeavours, although there be nothing  
“ sweeter than ease.

“ The boy who hath been exercised un-  
“ der the care of his parents, may attain the  
“ state of an accomplished man; but no  
“ one is a Pundit in the state he came from  
“ his mother's womb.”

Some of their philosophers insist, that  
God created all things perfectly good; that  
man, being a free agent, may be guilty of  
moral evil; but that this in no way proceeds  
from, or affects, the system of nature: that  
he is to be restrained from doing injury to  
others,





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others, by the rules established for the preservation of order in society; and that the pain and ills which invariably result from wicked actions, will alone be a never-failing punishment; as the happiness which a man receives from doing good, surpasses every other human blessing.





## S K E T C H    X I.

*Astronomy of the Brahmins\*.*

THE Brahmins are in possession of ancient astronomical tables, from which they annually compose almanacks, and foretell eclipses, although they are now, I believe, unacquainted with the principles upon which their ancestors constructed them. Various predictions, founded upon their

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\* An inquiry into, and a regular account of, the astronomy of India, is a work to which I readily acknowledge myself unequal: I therefore beg leave to refer the reader to the works of M. le Gentil and M. Bailly, and the remarks of Mr. Playfair, contained in the second volume of the Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh.

astrology,





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astrology, help to fill up these almanacks; some days are marked as lucky, and others as unlucky; and they likewise pretend to tell fortunes by means of horoscopes.

In their arithmetical calculations they are remarkably exact.—“ Their operations  
“ are very numerous, ingenious, and difficult, but when once learnt, perfectly  
“ sure. They apply to them from their  
“ early infancy, and they are so much accustomed to calculate sums the most complicated, that they will do almost immediately what Europeans would be long  
“ in performing. They divide the units  
“ into a great number of fractions. It is  
“ a study that seems peculiar to them, and  
“ which requires much time to learn. The  
“ most frequent division of the unit is into  
“ a hundred parts, which is only to be  
“ learnt consecutively, as the fractions are  
“ different according to the things that  
“ are numbered. There are fractions for  
“ money,





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“ money, for weights, for measures, in  
“ short for every thing that may be brought  
“ to arithmetical operations \*.”

The Hindoos reckon from the rising to  
the next rising sun, sixty *nasigey*; each

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\* La Croze.—He observes, “ the same practice  
“ undoubtedly existed among the Romans, which may  
“ explain some passages of ancient authors, as in  
“ Horace, *Art. Poet.* 325.

“ *Romani pueri longis rationibus affem*

“ *Discunt in partes centum deducere.*

“ It may likewise from hence be understood what is  
“ meant by two passages in Petronius that have hi-  
“ therto been obscure. In the first, a father says to  
“ a teacher,

“ *Tibi discipulus crescit Cicero meus, jam quatuor partes*  
“ *dicit.*

“ In the other, a man says, boastingly,

“ *Partis centum dico, ad as, ad pondus, ad nummum.*

“ I did not venture to give any examples of the  
“ calculations of the Indians, though I have many in  
“ my possession; but I do not in the least doubt that  
“ the arithmetick of the Indians was that of the  
“ Greeks and Romans.”

*nasigey*





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*nafigey* is divided into sixty *veinary*, and each *veinary* into sixty *taipary*:  $2 \frac{1}{2}$  *nafigey* are equal to one of our hours;  $2 \frac{1}{2}$  *veinary* to one of our minutes; and  $2 \frac{1}{2}$  *taipary*, to one of our seconds: therefore a *nafigey*, or as it may be called the *Hindoo hour*, is equal to 24 of our minutes; and the *veinary*, or *Hindoo minute*, to 24 of our seconds. The astronomical year of the Brahmans, which is said to consist of

N. V. T.

365, 15, 31, 15, answers accordingly to

H. M. Sec.

365, 6, 12, 30.

By Europeans the solar year is now computed at three hundred and sixty-five days five hours forty-eight minutes and fifty-five seconds. It was reckoned by Hipparchus, about 1940 years ago, at three hundred and sixty-five days five hours fifty-five minutes and twelve seconds; and when the astronomical tables  
of





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of the Brahmans were constructed, at three hundred and sixty-five days six hours twelve minutes and thirty seconds. Hence it would appear, that there is a gradual decrease in the length of the year; and if these calculations can be relied upon, we must conclude, that the earth approaches the sun; that its revolution is thereby shortened, and that the tables of the Brahmans, or the observations that fixed the length of their year, must have been made near 7300 years ago. The duration given to the year by Hipparchus, was confirmed by Ptolemy, who succeeded him; and the difference between our calculations and those of Hipparchus and Ptolemy, in some sort establishes the accuracy of those of the Brahmans\*.

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\* The Brahmans refer to a period 2400 years before the Kaly-youg, or 7292 years ago. See *Traité de l'Astronomie Indienne et Orientale*, par M. Bailly. Transf. of the R. S. at Edinburgh, vol. ii. &c. &c.

Monfieur





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Monfieur le Gentil and Monfieur Bailly\* have endeavoured to adjust the astronomical time of the Brahmans to that of the Europeans. Monfieur le Gentil fays :

“ C’eft ce que nous pouvons appeller  
“ l’année fyderale des Brames ; mais parce  
“ que les etoiles avancent felon eux, de  
“ 54 fecondes tous les ans d’occident en  
“ orient, on trouve (en fupposant encore  
“ avec eux le mouvement journalier du  
“ foleil d’un degre) qu’il faut oter  $21', 36''$   
“ pour avoir ce que nous appellons l’année  
“ tropique, ou equinoxiale de  $365^d, 5'$   
“  $50'', 54'''$ .

“ Cette determination eft de deux † minutes feulement plus grande que celle que  
“ les aftronomes admettent aujourd’hui pour

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\* Traité de l’Astronomie Indienne et Orientale, par Monfieur Bailly, published in 1787.

† 1. 59.





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“ la longueur de l’année ; mais elle est plus  
“ petite de  $4' \frac{2}{3}^*$  ou environ, que celle de  
“ Hipparque adoptée par Ptolémée, qui  
“ supposoit l’année beaucoup trop longue.  
“ Par conséquent, les anciens Brames con-  
“ noissoient la longueur de l’année solaire  
“ beaucoup mieux que ne l’ont connue  
“ Hipparque et Ptolémée.”

But, according to Monsieur le Gentil’s explanation, there would still remain a difference between the time given to the year by the Brahmans, and the modern astronomers, of 1 minute and 59 seconds ; and such being the case, I cannot see any good reason for admitting this explanation and condemning Hipparchus ; the more especially as his correctness with respect to the lunar period, is generally allowed.

The Hindoos allot four Yamams, or watches, to the day, and four to the night.

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\*  $4' 10$ .

Their