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K.K. Venugopal



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K.K. Venugopal

A

V I E W

OF THE

HISTORY, LITERATURE, AND RELIGION

OF

THE HINDOOS :

INCLUDING

A MINUTE DESCRIPTION OF

THEIR MANNERS AND CUSTOMS,

AND

TRANSLATIONS FROM THEIR PRINCIPAL WORKS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

BY THE REV. W. WARD,

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PRONUNCIATION OF HINDOO NAMES.

IN endeavouring to give the sounds of Sūngskritū words, the author has adopted a method, which he hopes unites correctness with simplicity, and avoids much of that confusion which has been so much complained of on this subject. If the reader will only retain in his memory, that the short ū is to be sounded as the short o in son, or the u in Burton; the French é, as a in plate; and the ēē as in sweet; he may go through the whole work with a pronunciation so correct, that a Hindoo would understand him. At the beginning and end of a word, the inherent vowel (ū) has the soft sound of au.

ERRATA.

Vol. I. p. lxxxvi. l. 9. for "adorating," read "adoring."

——— p. 9. l. 7. for "eight," read "eighth."

——— p. 256. l. 12. for "fled," read "fled away."

Vol. II. p. 138. l. 3. for "Bristol Hot-wells, with all its gilt crutches,"
read "the warm waters at Bath, with all the gilt crutches."

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INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

ON THE

HINDOO RELIGION.



THE whole system of Hindoo theology is founded upon the doctrine that the Divine Spirit, as the soul of the universe, becomes, in all animate beings, united to matter; that spirit is insulated or individuated by particular portions of matter, which it is continually quitting, and joining itself to new portions of matter^a; that the human soul is, in other words, God himself; that the knowledge of this, leading men to seek complete deliverance from the degrading and polluting influence of material objects, is the only means of being reunited to the divine nature; that this deliverance from matter may be obtained in the present state by separation from human intercourse, the practice of

^a There are two opinions among the Hindoos on this subject; some philosophers maintaining, that it is one soul which is united to sentient creatures; while others support a contrary opinion, and affirm, that human souls must be emanations from the Great Spirit, otherwise, when one person obtained absorption into the divine nature, all would obtain it at the same moment. The védantū philosophers teach, 'that God exists in millions of forms, from the ant to Brümha, the grandfather of the gods, as one moon is seen at once in twenty different pans of water.'

The agreement betwixt these opinions and those of the Greek philosophers is very remarkable:—'Almost all ancient philosophers agreed in admitting two principles in nature, one active and the other passive; but they differed in the manner in which they conceived these principles to subsist. Some held God and Matter to be two principles, which are eternally opposite; not only differing in their essence, but having no com-

bodily austerities, and entire abstraction of mind; and that, if not obtained in one birth, it is to be sought through every future transmigration till obtained.

This doctrine is taught in many parts of the Hindoo writings, especially in the *Dürshünüs*; which works, though almost

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mon principle by which they can be united. This was the doctrine taught by Anaxagoras, and after him by Plato, and the whole Old Academy. This system, for the sake of perspicuity, we will call the Dualistic system. Others were convinced, that nature consists of these two principles; but finding themselves perplexed by the difficulty with which they saw the Dualistic system to be encumbered, that of supposing two independent and opposite principles, they supposed both these to be comprehended in one universe, and conceived them to be united by a necessary and essential bond. To effect this, two different hypotheses were proposed: some thought God to have been eternally united to matter in one whole, which they called Chaos, whence it was sent forth, and at a certain time brought into form, by the energy of the divine inhabiting mind. This was the System of Emanation, commonly embraced by the ancient barbaric philosophers, and afterwards admitted into the early theogonies of the Greeks. Others attempted to explain the subject more philosophically, and, to avoid the absurdity which they conceived to attend both the former systems, asserted that God, the rational and efficient principle, is as intimately connected with the universe, as the human mind with the body, and is a forming power, so originally and necessarily inherent in matter, that it is to be conceived as a natural part of the original chaos. This system seems not only to have been received by the Ionic philosophers, Thales and Anaximander; but by the Pythagoreans, the followers of Heraclitus, and others. Zeno, determining to innovate upon the doctrine of the Academy, and neither choosing to adopt the Dualistic nor the Emanative System, embraced the third hypothesis, which, though not originally his own, we shall distinguish by the name of the Stoical System. Unwilling to admit, on the one hand, two opposite principles, both primary and independent, and both absolute and infinite; or on the other, to suppose matter, which is in its nature diametrically opposite to that of God, the active efficient cause, to have been derived by emanation from him; yet finding himself wholly unable to derive these two principles from any common source, he confounded their essence, and maintained that they were so essentially united, that their nature was one and the same.' *Enfield*, p. 329, 330.

wholly speculative, make known a method of abstraction, to assist ascetics in obtaining deliverance from mortal birth.

Udwāyanāndū, a sūnyasēē, and the compiler of 'the Essence of the Védantū,' says, 'Brūmhū and life are one: that which, pervading all the members of the body, gives to them life and motion, is called jēēvū, life; that which, pervading the whole universe, gives life and motion to all, is Brūmhū; therefore these two are one. Every kind of matter is without life; that which is created cannot possess life: therefore all life is the creator, or Brūmhū; God is the soul of the world. This is the substance of the Védantū philosophy.'

Not only is God thus declared to be the soul of the world, but the writer of the above work affirms, that the world itself is God—God expanding himself in an infinite variety of forms: 'All things past, present, and to come; all that is in the earth, sky, &c. of every class and description; all this is Brūmhū, who is the cause of all things, and the things themselves.' Yet this writer, in another part of this work, seems to affirm, that the universe is the *work* of God:—'The principle of life is Brūmhū; that which is animated is the work of Brūmhū^b, who directs every thing, as the charioteer directs the chariot. Brūmhū is everlasting and unchangeable; the world, which is his work, is changeable.'

This work represents Brūmhū, in his state of repose, as destitute of ideas or intelligence, and entirely separated from all intelligences. It describes this repose by comparing it to whatever may communicate the idea of undisturbed tranquillity; to the bosom of the unruffled ocean; or to the rest enjoyed in a deep sleep, in which there is an entire cessation even of the faculties of the mind.

^b Or, as some writers explain it, exists as an effect, as heat is an effect of fire.

The Védantū writers add, that at certain revolutions of time, 'Brūmhū, awaking from this repose, unites to himself his own energy, and creates the universe^c; that as soon as souls are united to matter, they become impressed, according to their destiny, with more or less of three qualities^d:—as 1st, with that which gives rise to excellence of character;—2dly, with that which excites to anger, restlessness, worldly desire, &c.—and 3dly, that which leads to inactivity, ignorance, and such-like errors. The character is formed, and the future destiny regulated, by the preponderance of any one of these qualities. Krishnū is represented in the Shrēe-Bhagūvūtū-Gēētū as teaching Urjoonū, that, 'the man who is born with divine destiny is endued with certain qualities, [here follow a number of excellent qualities;] that those who come into life under the influence of the evil destiny, are distinguished by hypocrisy, pride, presumption, harshness of speech, and ignorance; that divine destiny is for eternal absorption into the divine nature; and that the evil destiny confineth the soul to mortal birth^e.'

The soul then, by these writers, is considered as separated from the source of happiness when it takes mortal birth, and as remaining a miserable wanderer in various births and states, till it regain its place in the divine essence. A devotee, sighing for absorption, is described as uttering his feelings in words to this purport: 'When shall I be delivered from this world, and obtain God!'

^c 'When Brūmhū withdraws his energy, the destruction of the world succeeds; when he employs it, creation springs to birth.' *The Védantū-sarū*.

^d The possession of more or less of any one of these qualities is owing to the balance of merit or demerit in the preceding birth. Many Hindoo philosophers, however, have no idea of accountability as the cause of reward or suffering: they suppose that all actions, good and bad, produce certain natural effects, which ripen in a future birth; as poverty, disease, and wickedness, or riches, health, and works of merit.

^e See Wilkins's translation of this work.

In consonance with these ideas, a system of devotion has been formed, to enable men to emancipate themselves from the influence of material objects, and thus to prepare them for absorption. In the first place, the devotee is to acquire the right knowledge of Brūmhū, namely, that God and matter are the same; that Brūmhū is the soul of the world. 'That error^f which excites earthly desires, and impels to worldly exertions, is destroyed,' says the writer of the work already quoted, 'by the knowledge of Brūmhū.' The person possessed of these ideas of God is called 'the wise man,' *Brūmhū gnanee*; and he who is destitute of this knowledge is considered as in a state of pitiable ignorance, like an insect incrustated with matter.

Further to enable him to subdue his passions, and renounce all natural desires, he is directed to retire from the world; to counteract all his natural propensities; and to confine himself to intense meditation on Brūmhū, till he has thoroughly established in his mind this principle, that, 'seeing every thing proceeded from Brūmhū, and that, at the end of the four yoogūs, when the universe shall be dissolved, every thing will be absorbed into him again, therefore Brūmhū is every thing.'

The Védantū-sarū says, 'There are four ways by which the knowledge of Brūmhū is perfected:—1st, By that reflection, in which the person decides upon what is changeable and what is unchangeable in the world;—2dly, By cultivating a distaste of all sensual pleasures, and even of the happiness enjoyed by the gods;—3dly, By the following qualities, an unruffled mind, the subjugation of the passions, unrepenting generosity, contempt of the world, the rejection of whatever obstructs the acquisition of the knowledge of Brūmhū;—and 4thly, By unwavering faith in the shastrūs, added to the desire of absorption.'

^f Error here refers to the false idea, that a man's self and spirit are different, as that *I* is any thing different from spirit. This idea of the separate existence of *I*, leads to the idea of *mine*, and thus to every worldly desire.

Krishnū, in his conversation with Urjoonū, makes the perfection of religion to consist in subduing the passions, in perfect abstraction from all objects of the senses, and in fixing the whole mind on Brūmhū: I extract a few paragraphs from Wilkins.—‘A man is said to be confirmed in wisdom, when he forsaketh every desire which entereth into his heart, and of himself is happy and contented in himself. His mind is undisturbed in adversity, he is happy and contented in prosperity, and he is a stranger to anxiety, fear, and anger. Such a wise man is called a sage. The wisdom of that man is established, who, in all things, is without affection, and having received good or evil, neither rejoiceth at the one, nor is cast down by the other. His wisdom is confirmed, when, like the tortoise, he can draw in all his members, and restrain them from their wonted purpose.’ ‘The wise neither grieve for the dead, nor for the living.’ ‘The wise man, to whom pain and pleasure are the same, is formed for immortality.’ ‘The heart, which followeth the dictates of the moving passions, carrieth away the reason, as the storm the bark in the raging ocean.’ ‘The man whose passions enter his heart as waters run into the unswelling placid ocean, obtaineth happiness.’ Even at the hour of death, should he attain it, he shall mix with the incorporeal nature of Brūmhū.’ ‘The man who may be self-delighted and self-satisfied, and who may be happy in his own soul, hath no interest either in that which is done, or that which is not done.’ ‘The learned behold Brūmhū alike in the reverend bramhūn perfected in knowledge, in the ox, and in the elephant; in the dog, and in him who eateth of the flesh of dogs.’ ‘Those whose minds are fixed on this equality, gain eternity even in this world. They put their trust in Brūmhū, the eternal, because he is every where alike free from fault.’ ‘The enjoyments which proceed from the feelings, are as the wombs of future pain.’ ‘To the yogēe, gold, iron, and stones, are the same.’ ‘The yogēe constantly exerciseth

* This is strange doctrine in the mouth of Krishnū, who spent his youth in licentious amours; and afterwards cohabited with Radha, the wife of Ayanū-ghoshū, while he retained 1600 mistresses.

the spirit in private. He is recluse, of a subdued mind and spirit; free from hope, and free from perception. He planteth his own seat firmly on a spot that is undefiled, neither too high, nor too low, and sitteth upon the sacred grass which is called kooshū, covered with a skin and a cloth. There he, whose business is the restraining of his passions, should sit, with his mind fixed on one object alone, in the exercise of his devotion for the purification of his soul; keeping his head, neck, and body steady without motion, his eyes fixed on the point of his nose, looking at no other place around.' 'The man whose mind is endued with this devotion, and looketh on all things alike, beholdeth the supreme soul in all things, and all things in the supreme soul.' 'He who having closed up all the doors of his faculties, locked up his mind in his own breast, and fixed his spirit in his head, standing firm in the exercise of devotion, repeateth in silence Om! the mystic sign of Brūmhū, shall, on his quitting this mortal frame, calling upon me, without doubt go the journey of supreme happiness.' 'He my servant is dear unto me, who is unexpected, just, and pure, impartial, free from distraction of mind, and who hath forsaken every enterprize. He is worthy of my love, who neither requireth, nor findeth fault; who neither lamenteth, nor coveteth; and being my servant, hath forsaken both good and evil fortune; who is the same in friendship and in hatred, in honour and dishonour, in cold and in heat, in pain and in pleasure; who is unsolicitous about the events of things; to whom praise and blame are as one; who is of little spirit, and pleased with whatever cometh to pass; who owneth no particular home, and who is of a steady mind.' 'Wisdom is exemption from attachments and affection for children, wife, and home; a constant evenness of temper upon the arrival of every event, whether longed for or not; a constant and invariable worship paid to me alone; worshipping in a private place; and a dislike to the society of man.'

A most singular ceremony, called yogū, is said to have been formerly practised by ascetics to prepare them for absorption. I

give an account of this ceremony from the first part of the Pa-tñjũlũ Dũrshũnũ, and the Gorũkshũ-sũnghita :—

The yogēē must in the first place, by medicines (here described) reduce the appetites of the body, and increase its strength; he must then learn the proper posture for the ceremony: this posture may be various, but a particular one is here enjoined—the yogēē is to put his legs across in a sitting posture, and to hold his feet with his hands crossed behind him. The next act of austerity is that of learning to inhale and discharge his breath; in doing which, he is to take a piece of cloth fifteen cubits long and four fingers in breadth, and swallow it repeatedly, drawing it up and taking it down his throat, drinking water at intervals. He must next choose a seat on some sacred spot, at the bottom of a vũtu tree, at some place frequented by pilgrims, near an image of an uncreated lingũ, or in any place peculiarly pleasant to a yogēē; but it must be a secret one.—That on which he must sit may be either kooshũ grass, or the skin of a tyger or a deer, or a blanket; he must not sit on wood, nor on the earth, nor on cloth; his back, neck, and head must be exactly erect; and he must remain motionless, keeping his eyes fixed on his nose. The act of yogũ consists of several parts: the devotee must first with his thumbs and fingers prevent the air from issuing through his eyes, ears, nostrils, and mouth, and with his feet bind up the two other avenues of respiration. This he is to practise by degrees till he is able to exist without inspiration and respiration. He who is thus far perfected will be able to subdue his passions, and to disrelish all the pleasures of the senses. Should the mind, at any time, be again entangled in worldly attachments, the devotee must study the essential virtue of things, as, that the world is a dream; that God is the all in all; and thus bring back the mind to abstraction. He is next to meditate on his guardian deity according to the rules of the shastrũ. After thus annihilating, as it were, the body and the world, he is then to fix in his mind that he and Brũmhũ are one, and so to settle this point as never to lose sight of it, nor return

to earthly attachments. From this state of mind arises complete pleasure; he becomes dead to food and to every other bodily want.

The yogēē who has attained this state of perfection becomes emancipated in the following manner:—while he sits confining the air within his body, and closing his eyes, by the power of wisdom all his members become dead to action; he unites the energy which is lodged in the body to the soul, and they both ascend by means of the veins and arteries to the skull, from which the soul escapes, by the *basilar suture*: and the body being thus shaken off, he is reunited to the supreme soul^m.

The *Védantū-saru* also pronounces in favour of an opinion of the philosopher *Shūnkūrū*, that the practice of ceremonies is to be renounced by the person seeking absorption, in whom all desires respecting himself are to be annihilated.

From the preceding sketch, the reader will be able to form some idea of this system of Hindoo theology, which is doubtless very ancient. No yogēēs, however, now exist, who perform these bodily austerities to the extent laid down in the *shastrūs*. A number of mendicants may be seen, who profess to aim at abstraction of mind, and contempt of the world; but they are in general the greatest sensualists in the country.

Amongst the learned, a few are to be found, who consider the attainment of divine wisdom, as the only means of securing future beatitude: these persons either renounce all worldly connections and become pilgrims, or they remain in a secular state, and ground their expectations (if they have any) of future happiness, on their speculative opinions being less gross than those of the vulgar. As an apology for not practising severe austerities, and for continuing in a secular state, they quote a sentence

^m For further remarks on absorption, and on those mendicants who practise austerities leading to it, the reader is referred to vol. ii. pp. 177, 178. 197—201.

of Jūnikū : 'A man does not become a hermit by residing in a forest ; but he is a hermit, who even in his own house subdues his passions.' Some of these persons despise the popular superstition.

The absurdity and impiety of the opinions upon which the practices of these yogēes are founded, need not be exposed : the doctrine which destroys all accountability to the Creator, and removes all that is criminal in immorality, must be condemned by every good man ; and the absurdity of rejecting those rational enjoyments which at once prove the beneficence of the Creator, and contribute to the refinement of our nature, is so flagrant, that the slightest notice of it may surely be considered as more than necessary to the discharge of our duty to the interests of Christian morals.

The author may however remark, that he has had many opportunities of witnessing the pernicious effects of the belief, that it is God in man who is the author of every volition, and that evil and good actions are both to be referred to him. A Hindoo, perverted by these ideas, does not perceive the evil of ascribing every villainous action to God ; though when the dreadful and unavoidable result of this doctrine has been pointed out, many revolt from the conclusion. Under the influence of this doctrine, that the human soul is God, the crimes of a malefactor lose their turpitude, and he is bewailed as a person who has acted under unfortunate influence, or as one born with evil destiny. It is also easy to perceive, that where such a belief prevails, all efforts to fly from evil, and to attain moral perfection, are out of the question :—' God does every thing ;' ' My evil destiny follows me every where, as a shadow the body,' is the method by which the Hindoo accounts for all his evil propensities and unjust actions.

Another class of Hindoos place a greater reliance on DEVOTION than on divine knowledge. They derive their opinions from different parts of the Hindoo writings, and from favourite books

of their own, as the Madhyū-bhashyū, Bhūktee-rūsamritū-sindhoo, &c. One of the sentiments of this sect is thus given in the Shrēe-bhagūvūtū :—‘ He who, renouncing the service of God, enters the path of wisdom, (practises religious austerities,) works hard at bruising the straw, but obtains only chaff.’ Another of their poets has a verse to this purport :—‘ He who dies at Kashēe obtains absorption : true ; but the cause of his emancipation is his devotion.’—Vūrahū, a poet belonging to the court of Vik-rūm-adyū, says, personifying a person of this sect, ‘ O God ! I ask not for the merit of works ; nor for riches ; nor for fame ; I leave all this to fate ; nor do I refuse to endure the fruit of my actions :—but this I ask, that, through every transmigration, I may be thy devoted servant.’—Vilwū-mungūlū, another poet of this sect, says, addressing himself to Vishnoo, ‘ O God ! I desire not absorption. I ask for a distinct existence, and to be always near thee, as my lord and master.’ Some of these persons express attachment to their guardian deity in the most familiar acts of devotion—as his friends, or servants ; in songs or prayers ; by bowing or making offerings to his image, by washing its feet, by repeating his name, or listening to his praise, or meditating on his qualities. These persons are mostly found among the followers of Krishnū and Choitūnyū.

Such a worshipper presents himself before the image of Krishnū, and says, ‘ Oh, t’hakoorū ! thou art God, the maker of the world, the saviour, the friend of the friendless : I am destitute ; I am thy servant ; save me !’ Others, more fervent in their attachment, omitting the usual purifications and ablutions before morning worship, hasten, as soon as they rise, to pay all those marks of respect and attention to the image which belong to the character under which they worship it. For instance, one man’s image is that of the infant Krishnū : he imagines it necessary, that the god should be honoured as a child, and he therefore makes an offering of sweetmeats to him early in the morning ; he is very careful too that the image should be laid down to rest, and raised up again, only at the appointed hours ; he bathes, anoints it, and adorns it with the utmost fondness. Songs in

praise of Krishnū are very common amongst this sect; and sometimes an enthusiast falls to the ground while singing, and exhibits all the symptoms of superstitious frenzy. These persons reject many of the Hindoo ceremonies; but they repeat the name of Krishnū, worship the common images of this god, and observe the national festivals to his honour. Some individuals are directed in their religious duties by the Hindoo writings: but the great body are enthusiasts, following the impulse of feelings enkindled by their own impure imaginations. Some of them wander from village to village, proclaiming the name and reciting the praises of Krishnū.

Those who reverence the philosophical doctrine, and those who thus adhere to devotion, form however but a very small part of the Hindoo population. The great majority of the community are attached to the popular ceremonies, considering them as at least *leading to* the knowledge of God, or as laying in a stock of merit which will influence their condition in this or a future birth.

The other branch of Hindoo theology enjoins RELIGIOUS DUTIES, as preparing a person for that state which leads to absorption. Krishnū, in his address to Urjoonū, thus holds up the value of religious practice:—‘Perform thy duty, and make the event equal whether it terminate in good or evil. The miserable are so on account of the event of things. Wise men, who have abandoned all thought of the fruit of their actions, are freed from the chains of birth, and go to the regions of eternal happiness¹. Jūnūkü and others have attained perfection even by

¹ Mr. Wilkins has thus translated this part of the Bhagūvūtū; but the fact is, that there is no *distinct* happiness in the Hindoo absorption, because there is no remaining individuality. The spirit being liberated from every thing which is not spirit, and absorbed in the ocean of universal spirit, or deity, there can be no such thing as individual enjoyment. The Hindoos illustrate their idea on this subject, by comparing the soul to air confined in a vessel, which, when the vessel breaks, is immediately lost in the vast body of air which composes the atmosphere.

works. Wise men call him a pūndit, whose every undertaking is free from the idea of desire. He abandoneth a desire of a reward of his actions; he is always contented and independent, and although he may be engaged in a work, he as it were doth nothing. God is to be obtained by him who maketh God alone the object of his works. The speculative and the practical doctrines are but one, for both obtain the self-same end, and the place which is gained by the followers of the one is gained by the followers of the other. The man who, performing the duties of life, and quitting all interest in them, placeth them upon Brūmhū the supreme, is not tainted by sin; but remaineth, like the leaf of the lotus, unaffected by the waters.—If thou shouldest be unable, at once, steadfastly to fix thy mind on me, endeavour to find me by means of constant practice. If after practice thou art still unable, follow me in my works supreme, for by performing works for me thou shalt obtain perfection.'

This brings us to the popular superstition of the Hindoos, of which I shall now endeavour to give a summary account, beginning with their mythology.

It is very difficult, perhaps, to speak decisively on the precise origin of any of the *Ancient Systems of Idolatry*; but not so difficult to trace idolatry itself to certain natural causes, and to prove, that the heathen deities owe their origin to the common darkness and depravity of men; who, rejecting the doctrine of the divine unity, and considering God as too great or too spiritual to be the object of human worship, chose such images as their darkness or their passions suggested. Hence idolatry has arisen out of circumstances common to all heathen nations; which fact, and another hereafter mentioned, will account for many coincidences in the mythology of nations the most remote, while differences in manners and customs, and in the degrees of civilization, may account for most of the diversities found in the images and worship of different idolatrous nations.

It is not to be supposed that any of the images invented by the

heathen were intended to be representations of the One God, according to the ideas given of this adorable Being in the sacred Scriptures; they are images of beings formed by the fancies of men, who 'by wisdom knew not God.' It is probable, indeed, that no heathen nation ever made a single idol in honour of 'the one living and true God;' and that direct worship to Him was never offered by any heathens.

Nor does it appear, from the various systems of idolatry, that the heathen regarded the gods as intercessors with the Supreme Being. It is certain that no such idea exists among the Hindoos, who never worship the One God, either directly or through the intercessions of others. The gods are regarded as the only divine beings from whom evil is to be dreaded, or good to be expected. It is true, I have heard the bramhūns often speak of the worship of the gods as introducing the worshipper to a greater approximation to final beatitude, but this has nothing to do with the Christian doctrine of mediation.

Writers on heathen mythology have frequently supposed, that the extraordinary bodily organs of the gods were intended to represent the *perfections of Deity*. Such writers, in elucidating the Hindoo system, would have said, 'Indrū is represented as full of eyes^k, to exhibit the divine omniscience; Brūmha with four faces, to display the perfect wisdom of God; and Doorga with ten hands, to teach that God is almighty.' It is a fact, however, that the Hindoos are never thus instructed by the forms of their idols. When the author once interrogated a learned bramhūn on this subject, he rejected this Christian explanation of the forms of his idols, and referred him to the image of Ravūnū, the cannibal, who is painted with a hundred arms, and ten heads^l.

^k The Hindoo fable on this subject is so insufferably gross, that it cannot be printed.

^l Thus Briareus, one of the monsters brought forth by the earth, is said to have had a hundred arms, with which he threw up to heaven the rocks from the sea shore against Jupiter.

It has been common too to represent the idols as personifications of the *virtues*, and as teaching, by hieroglyphics, a theory of morals. As it respects the Hindoos, however, the fact is, that they have still, for popular use, a system of morals to seek: some of their idols are actually personifications of *vice*; and the formularies used before the images, so far from conveying any moral sentiment, have the greatest possible tendency to corrupt the mind with the love of riches and pleasure^m.

To the author it seems equally improbable, that the original framers of idols designed to teach by them a system of *natural science*. The distance of time betwixt the formation of different images, militates strongly against such an idea: men of science, also, have generally held idolatrous rites in contempt; but before a man would sit down to frame an image, to teach the sciences, his mind must have been enthusiastically attached to idolatry. Nor does it appear probable, that the Hindoo poets were the first who set up idol worship; though we admit, that many ideas on this subject were borrowed from their extravagant descriptions, and ethereal visions. The introduction of new idols seems, in most instances, to have been the work of kings, who sought the *gratification* of the populace, rather than their instruction; and the exhibition of popular sentiments, rather than the teaching of profound mysteries, or the principles of science. It appears from the Brūmhū-voivürttū pooranū, that king Soorūt'hū first set up the image of Doorga; king Mūngūlū, that of Lūkshmēē; Ushwū-pūtee, that of Savitrēē, the wife of Brūmha; king Sooyūgnū, that of Radha, the mistress of Krishnū; Rūmyū-rūt'hū, king of Oojjūnyinēē, that of Kartikéyū; king Shivū, that of Sōōryū; and the sage Boudhayūnū, that of Gūnéshū.

The author imagines, that the disclosure of real facts respecting the Mythology of the Hindoos, would greatly tend to eluci-

^m See Mr. Colebrooke's translation of many of these formularies, in his excellent Essays on the Religious Ceremonies of the Hindoos, in the vth and viith volumes of the Asiatic Researches.

date the origin of that of ALL THE EASTERN NATIONS; and he here offers to the consideration of his readers a conjecture or two, the fruit of his own enquiries. The philosophers of all these nations conceived, that the Great Spirit remains for ever unknown, that he neither comes within the thoughts nor the speech of men. In the Chandogyū oopūnishūd of the Rig védū, we have a discourse on this subject, in which Shwétū-kétoo enquired of Boudhayūnū respecting Brūmhū: the sage answered him by an impressive silence: on being called upon for the reason of this silence, he answered, ‘*Brūmhū is undescribable*: he who says, “I know Brūmhū,” knows him not; he who says, “I know him not,” has obtained this knowledge.’ The védū declares, that ‘he is that which has never been seen nor known.’ In other words, he is the Athenian ‘unknown God.’ The One God is never worshipped by the Hindoos as a mere spiritual being, but always as united to matter, and before some image.

When Brūmhū resolved to create, according to the pooranūsⁿ, he looked upon^o that which is denominated by the Hindoo philosophers delusion, or inanimate energy^p, and became subject to the three qualities (goonūs) of which it is composed—that which leads to truth, and is called sūttū; that which excites desires, (rūjū;) and that which leads to sensuality, (tūmū.) He now created time, nature, and future consequences; the primary elements; the organs of sense, of action, and of intellect: he

ⁿ The Shrēe-Bhagūvūtū, &c. The Noiyayikūs declare, that the universe was created from atoms; while the Mēemangūkūs, equally wise, affirm, that the consequences of actions were the only things united to birth.

^o ‘Or,’ as the word is explained by some Hindoo scholars, ‘the first inclination of the Godhead to diversify *himself*, by creating worlds.’ Sir W. Jones.

^p It is called delusion, or appearance, to shew, that it is something assumed for an occasion, and which, when that occasion is served, will be destroyed: hence they say, that matter is from everlasting, but is subject to destruction. It is called inanimate energy, as it supplies the forms of things, though the vivifying principle is God.

next became the first form, or pattern, or the aggregate, of life, and individuated himself into separate portions of animal life; and then, under the name of Vishnoo, he created the universe from the waters, and entered it as the soul of the world.

While Vishnoo lay asleep on the waters, a lotus ascended from his navel, from which sprung Brümha, the creator. Shivü, Vishnoo, and Brümha, are considered as the representations of the three goonüs: Vishnoo of the süttü goonü, Brümha of the rüjü, and Shivü of the tümü. We have no regular account of the creation of Vishnoo and Shivü. Almost all the other Hindoo deities are found to be derived from the three principal gods:—Indrü, Kamü-dévü, Doorga, Söoryü, Ugnee, Püvünü, Vüroonü, Güroorü, Vishwü-kürma, Sürüswütēē, Yümü, &c. are the descendants of *Brümha*;—Güneshü, Jügünnat'hü, Bulüramü, Ramü, Krishnü, Gopalü, Gopēē-nat'hü, Valü-Gopalü, Choitünyü, Sütyü-Narayünü, Lükshmēē, &c. are forms of *Vishnoo*;—Kartikeyü, Pünchanünü, Roodrü, Kalü-Bhoirüvü, &c. are forms of *Shivü*. 'Thus,' as Sir W. Jones has observed, 'we must not be surprised at finding, on a close examination, that the characters of all the Pagan deities, male and female, melt into each other, and at last into one or two.'

But the enquiry returns, 'What is the object of worship among the Hindoos?' It is not the ONE GOD, but this compound being, the soul of the world inclosed in matter, the primeval energy, the prolific and vivifying principle dwelling in all animated existences⁹, or in other words the personification of

⁹ When the following lines of Pope were read to Gopalü-türkalünkarü, a learned bramhün, he started from his seat, begged for a copy of them, and declared that the author must have been a Hindoo:—

'All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
Whose body Nature is, and God the soul;—
Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,
Glows in the stars, and blossoms in the trees;
Lives through all life, extends through all extent,
Spreads undivided, operates unspent.'

whatever the disordered imaginations of the Hindoos have attributed to this God encompassing himself with delusion^r. This energy is said to have created the universe; and therefore this, as displayed in the grandest of the forms it assumes^s, is the object of worship. Hence the gods, the heavens collectively, the sun and moon, as well as the stars, the sea, mighty rivers, and extraordinary appearances in nature, receive the adorations of the Hindoos^t. This energy itself has been personified and worshipped, not only in the form of Bhūgūvūtē^u, but, as it is manifested equally in creation, in the government of the world, and in the work of destruction, in Brūmha, Vishnoo, and Shivū. The universe being full of the divine majesty, a deity has been consecrated as the regent of every element; and, to complete this mass of folly, the bramhūn and the devout mendicant, as

^r The Tūntrūs teach, that after Brūmhū had entered the world, he divided himself into male and female.

^s ‘ It seems a well-founded opinion, that the whole crowd of gods and goddesses in ancient Rome, and modern Vánáres, mean only the powers of nature, and principally those of the Sun, expressed in a variety of ways, and by a multitude of fanciful names.’ *Sir W. Jones.*—‘ Nature herself, and its plastic powers, originating solely in the sovereign energies of the supreme creative source of all being, they (the Asiatics) absurdly dignified by the majestic denomination of God. This supreme creative energy, diffused through nature, they distinguished by various names: sometimes it was Osiris, the fountain of LIGHT, the SUN, the prolific principle by which that was invigorated; sometimes it was the life-generating FIRE, the divine offspring of the solar deity; and it was sometimes called by an appellation consonant to the SOUL OF THE WORLD. The FIRST VIVIFIC PRINCIPLE, emanating from the primeval source of being, is visibly of Chaldaic origin; and thence, through the medium of the Egyptians, the Stoic philosophers doubtless had their doctrine of ‘ the fiery soul of the world,’ by which they supposed all things to be created, animated, and governed.’ *Maurice.*

^t ‘ They (the pagans) called the elementary fire Pitha, Vulcan, Ugnē; the solar light they denominated Osiris, Mithra, Sooryū, Apollo; and the pervading air, or spirit, Cneph, Narayūnū, Zeus, or Jupiter.’ *Maurice.*

^u Many Hindoos are denominated shaktūs, as devoted to the worship of this shūktee, or energy. It is remarkable, also, that all the goddesses are called the energies of their lords, as well as matrees, or mothers.

sharing more largely of the indwelling deity, have received the adoration of the multitude.

If we recur to the bodily powers of the different images worshipped by the Hindoos, we see the same principle exhibited: hence Unüntü has a thousand heads; Brümha has four faces; Indrü is full of eyes; Doorga has ten, and even Ravünü, the giant, has an hundred arms:—the formidable weapons^x of the gods too, have evidently the same allusion, as well as their symbols and vehicles, among which we find the eagle^y, the serpent, the lion, the tiger, the elephant, the bull, the buffalo, &c. The abominable lingü worship too, (the last state of degradation to which human nature can be driven,) no doubt took its rise from the same doctrine.

Under the influence of this doctrine, the philosophic mind chose, as the objects of its adoration, the forms in which this energy displays itself with the greatest magnificence, and almost confined its worship to the primary elements, the heavenly bodies, and aërial beings;—the great body of the community became attached to this energy in its forms of preservation;—persons of gloomy habits, as ascetics and yogēēs, adored it in the work of destruction, as connected with emancipation and with return to ineffable repose in the divine essence. The first class chose the retirement of forests as the scene of their contemplations; the second, the public streets, to adore the prolific power; and the last retired to gloomy caverns^z, for the celebration of

^x Indrü's thunder-bolt; the Brümhastrü, a weapon wielded by the gods, which infallibly destroys an enemy. 'Vishnoo's chükra, a weapon in the form of a circle, continually vomiting flames.' *Maurice*.

^y 'Vishnoo riding upon his Güroorü, or eagle,' says *Maurice*, 'puts us in mind of the thunder-bearing eagle of the Grecian Jupiter.'

^z The Scythians, the Druids, and other ancient nations, it is well known, worshipped this energy in its destructive forms in gloomy recesses, and there offered human and other victims. In the caverns of Salsette and Elephanta, too, the same horrid rites were practised by gloomy ascetics.

pose, (*even to cure the itch!*) but most of them appear to refer to the doctrine of the periodical creation and destruction of the world^d,—the appearances of nature^e,—the heavenly bodies^f,—the history of deified heroes^g,—the poetical wars of the giants with the gods^h,—or to the real or imagined wants of mankindⁱ.

It cannot be doubted, from what has been published of the *védüs*, said to be the most ancient of the Hindoo writings, that the PRIMARY ELEMENTS, fire, air, water, earth, and space, with the HEAVENLY BODIES, and AERIAL BEINGS, were the first objects of worship among this people.

The worship of the *primary elements* possibly originated in the doctrine of the *védüs* respecting the eternity of matter; for we find in these writings the elements deified, and called by appropriate names, as in the modern mythology of the Hindoos.

The worship of the *heavenly bodies* may probably be attributed to the astronomical notions of the Hindoos: and, as the worship of heathens has always been dictated by their fears and hopes rather than by their reason, it is not a matter of surprise that they should have worshipped the host of heaven, while they believed the stars to have such a mighty and immediate influence on their destiny here and hereafter. In the prayers of the *védüs*, the name of *Indrū* is found, who was probably considered as a

^d As *Brümha* and *Shivü*.

^e The deified elements, as *Püvünü*, *Vüroonü*, &c.

^f *Söoryü*, *Chüdrü*, &c.

^g *Ramü*, who, in reference to his forest residence, is painted green, and carries a bow and arrows.

^h *Doorga*, who has a giant at her feet, and the head of another in her hand. The author will not presume to decide, whether these wars of the gods have reference to human contests, and as such are to be regarded as real history disguised in fable; or whether images of this class have been borrowed merely from the reveries of the poets.

ⁱ *Sürüswütēē*, the goddess of learning; *Unü-pöörnü*, the goddess of plenty, &c.

personification of the heavens: his name, *Indrū*, signifies the glorious; and his body, covered with stars, might easily be supposed to resemble 'the spangled heavens.'

The worship of *aërial beings*, under the general name of spirits, is easily accounted for from the proneness of mankind to superstitious fears respecting invisible existences, and from the notion found in the Hindoo writings, that every form of animated existence has its tutelar divinity presiding over it^k.

These appear to have been the first gods worshipped in India, though such a system of mythology could in no way account for the existence and government of the universe; which exhibited a process for which this system made no provision. This might therefore induce later Hindoo theologians to add three new gods, under the characters of the CREATOR, the PRESERVER, and the DESTROYER,—*Brūmha*, *Vishnoo*, and *Shivū*; and the pooranūs exhibit each of these gods at his post, committing faults and absurdities that would disgrace beings destitute of every spark of divinity, and even of reason.

A philosophical doctrine found in the *Tūntrūs*, having reference to the supposed union of spirit and matter in the formation of the world^l, has introduced an order of FEMALE deities among this people, at the head of which stands *Bhūgūvūtēē*, or *Doorga*. Of this goddess, many forms are worshipped among the Hindoos; and indeed almost all the goddesses are only different forms of *Bhūgūvūtēē*, as the image of *Prūkritee*, or nature.

Jūgūnnat'hū, the lord of the world; *Koovérū*, the god of

^k Diseases also, and divisions of time, as well as places, have their tutelar deities. The god *Bhūgū*, who is blind of both eyes, presides over the members of the body.

^l Mr. Paterson thinks, that the mixed image of *Hūrū-Gourēē*, in which *Shivū* and *Doorga* are united in one image, is intended to represent this union.

riches; Kamū-dévū, the god of love; Kartikéyū, the god of war; Yūmū, the regent of death; and Vishwū-kūrmū, the architect of the gods; seem to have originated in the fables of the Hindoos, and in the imagined necessities of a people destitute of just ideas respecting Divine Providence.

Krishnū, Ramū, and other terrestrial gods, are evidently deified HEROES.

These general remarks may probably account for the whole system of Hindoo idolatry, without the absolute necessity of admitting that this people borrowed their gods from their neighbours. That they borrowed some, or the features of some, many striking coincidences hereafter mentioned seem to indicate; but, these coincidences excepted, we have found no further evidence of this fact^m.

I shall now give some account of the gods found in the HINDOO PANTHEONⁿ, as a very brief notice of what the reader has to expect in this volume.

It may be necessary, however, to premise, that the Hindoos profess to have 330,000,000 of gods: not that they have even the names of such a number; but they say, that God performs all his works by the instrumentality of the gods, and that all human actions, as well as all the elements, have their tutelar deities.

Images have been chosen to fix the mind of the worshipper,

^m Should the reader, however, be inclined to pursue this subject, he will find much ingenious conjecture, and many apparent resemblances betwixt the Egyptian, Greek, and Roman mythology and that of the Hindoos, in Mr. Paterson's essay already alluded to.

ⁿ The Hindoos have no temple like the Pantheon at Rome; but the palaces of some Hindoo rajas contains courts filled with idols, each of which has an establishment of priests, who daily perform the ceremonies of worship.

and attributes of power and splendour, and various fables, having been added in the forms of devotion and the addresses to the gods, all these attributes are recognized, and the contents of these fables rehearsed, to raise in the mind of the worshipper the highest thoughts of the power of the idol.

He who approaches an idol, seeking the happiness of a future state, is required to fix in his mind only one idea, that the god can save him: and in this respect all the gods, however various their images, are equal. But when a Hindoo is anxious to obtain any peculiar favour, he applies to the god whose province it is to bestow it: thus, he who prays to Brūmha, entreats that he may be like him, in order to absorption; but he who is anxious that his members may continue perfect, and that he may enjoy the pleasures of the senses, worships Indrū; he who desires children, prays to the progenitors of mankind; he who seeks worldly prosperity, worships Lūkshmēē; he who prays for a shining body, supplicates Ugnee; the person who is anxious for strength, applies to Roodrū; the glutton prays to Uditee; he who pants for a crown, applies to Vishwū-dévū or Swayūmbhoovū; a king intreats Sadhyū, that his kingdom may be free from sedition; he who prays for long life, addresses himself to Ushwinēē-koomarū; he who desires corpulence, addresses Prit'hivēē; he who prays that he may preserve his homestead, petitions Prit'hivēē and the regents of space; he who seeks beauty, prays to the Gūndhūrvūs; he who prays for a good wife, calls on Oorvūsēē, a celestial courtesan; he who seeks honour, prays to Yūgnū; he who is anxious for storehouses full of wealth, calls on Prūchéta; the seeker of wisdom, solicits the favour of Shivū; he or she who seeks union and happiness in the marriage state, addresses Doorga; he who wishes to destroy his enemy, supplicates Noiritū; he who is anxious for strength of body, prays to Vayoo; he who prays to be preserved from obstruction in his affairs, calls on Kooverū; he who prays for the merit of works, applies to the regent of verse; he who prays for pleasure in the enjoyment of earthly things, addresses Chūndrū; he who desires freedom from worldly pas-

sions, he who asks for the completion of all his desires, he who prays for absorption, and the person free from all desire, worship Brūmha. Hence it appears, that all the Hindoo gods, except Brūmha, are considered as bestowing only temporal favours; and it has been already observed, that this god has been abandoned, and left without either temples or images. Thus the whole system excites in the mind of the worshipper only cupidity and the love of pleasure; and to this agrees what I have repeatedly heard from sensible bramhūns, that few if any persons now attend the public festivals with a direct view to a future state.

It is common for the Hindoos to speak of some of their gods as benevolent, and to treat others as malignant beings^o: Shivū, as well as other gods, unites both these qualities; in one hand he holds a dreadful weapon, and with two others he blesses a worshipper, and invites him to approach. Not one of these images, however, conveys the least idea of the moral attributes of God.

1. *Brūmha*. This god may be properly noticed first, as he is called the *creator*, and the grandfather of gods and men; in the latter designation he resembles Jupiter, as well as in the lasciviousness of his conduct, having betrayed a criminal passion towards his own daughter. Brūmha's image is never worshipped, nor even made; but the Chūndēe describes it as that of a red man with four faces^p. He is red, as a mark of his being full of the rūjū goonū; he has four faces, to remind the worshipper that the védūs proceeded from his four mouths. In one hand he has a string of beads, to shew that his power as creator was

^o Hindoo women, and the lower orders, regard Pūnchanūnū, Dūkshinū-rayū, Mūnūsa, Shēētūla, Shūst'hēē, as malignant demons, and worship them through fear, still praying to them for protection. The superior deities, though arrayed with attributes of terror, are considered as using their power only in favour of the worshipper.

^p Brūmha had five heads, but Shivū deprived him of one, as a punishment for his lust.

derived from his devotion. The pan of water in his left hand points out, that all things sprang from water. It has excited much surprise, that this deity, so pre-*eminent*, should be entirely destitute of a temple and of worshippers. Mr. Paterson supposes, that, in some remote age, the worshippers of Shivü carried on a contest with the followers of Brümha, and wholly suppressed the worship of this god. This conjecture opens a wide field of enquiry; but this gentleman does not adduce any historical evidence of the fact. The story of Shivü's cutting off one of the heads of Brümha, and the existence of violent contentions betwixt different sects of Hindoos at the present day, can scarcely be considered as establishing it, though the conjecture appears not altogether improbable. These contentions for superiority are annually renewed at Hüree-dwarü, Uyodhya, &c. betwixt the Voishnävüs (Ramatüs) and the followers of Shivü, in which quarrels many perish⁹.

2. *Vishnoo*. This is the image of a black man, with four arms, sitting on Gūroorü, a creature half-bird, half-man, and holding in his hands the sacred shell, the chükrü, the lotus, and a club. His colour (black) is that of the destroyer, which is intended to show, that Shivü and he are one; he has four hands, as the representative of the male and female powers; the shell (blown on days of rejoicing) implies that Vishnoo is a friendly deity; the chükrü is to teach that he is wise to protect; the lotus is to remind the worshipper of the nature of final emancipation, that, as this flower is raised from the muddy soil, and after rising by degrees from immersion in the waters, expands itself above the surface to the admiration of all, so man is emancipated from the chains of human birth; the club shews that he chastises the wicked.

⁹ Raja-Ramü, a learned shikh, employed as a translator in the Serampore printing-office, says, that about forty years ago, not less than 10,000 persons, and, about twenty years ago, 4 or 5,000 perished in these contests at Hüree-dwarü. Another proof, added to that respecting the Bouddhüs, that the Hindoo is not free from the fiercest spirit of persecution.

Güroorü is a portion of Shivü ; his body represents the védü. Vishnoo is distinguished as being the source of most of the Hindoo incarnations ; in which forms he commands the worship of the greatest division of the Hindoo population. I know of no temples nor festivals in honour of Vishnoo. He is called the *Preserver*, but the actions ascribed to him under this character are referred to other forms and names. The shalgramü, a stone, is a form of Vishnoo. During four months of the year, all the forms of this god are laid to sleep. From the agreement of this fact with what is said of Horus, Mr. Paterson gathers a resemblance betwixt Vishnoo and Horus, and supposes that the Hindoos derived their system from the Egyptian : he conjectures, also, that the fable of Vishnoo's lying down to sleep, turning to one side, and rising, refer to the increase, the greatest rise, and the retiring of the waters of the Ganges, the Indian Nile. The state of the river in these four months agrees with this supposition, though the bramhüns I consulted were not aware that this ceremony had any connection with the Ganges. Vishnoo is sometimes called the household god.

3. *Shivü* is a white man with five faces and four arms, riding on a bull. In one hand he holds an axe, as the destroyer of the wicked ; in another a deer, alluding to a sacrifice, when the deer, fleeing from the sacrificial knife, took refuge with Shivü ; with another hand he is bestowing a blessing, and with the last forbidding fear. Four of his faces are designed to point out the sixty-four tüntrüs, and the other a different tüntrü. The bull is a form of Vishnoo, as the personification of religion ; its four feet are, religious austerities, purity, compassion, and truth. In some particulars, this god strongly reminds us of Vulcan and Bacchus. The few Hindoos in Bengal who adopt Shivü as their guardian deity, are called soivyüs. Except those of the lingü and Pünchanünü, very few temples exist in honour of any other form of Shivü : and none of his form riding on a bull. Before the lingü, Shivü is however daily worshipped under eight separate names, answering to the sun, moon, wind, fire, water, earth, air, and an officiating priest at a sacrifice. Mr. Paterson thinks,

that there were once fierce contentions amongst the four principal sects, and that as the soivyūs first prevailed against the worshippers of Brūmha, so, in its turn, this sect was subdued by the followers of Vishnoo and of the female deities. The filthy appearance of Shivū as a mendicant covered with ashes, and his quarrels with Doorga, his wife, have given rise to several ludicrous stories found in the pooranūs. This marriage excited the same surprise as that betwixt Venus and Vulcan, and seems an unaccountable event, unless it was intended to illustrate the gross idea of the Tūntrū writers respecting the origin of the universe. Shivū has three eyes like Jupiter, wears a tiger's skin like Bacchus, and like him wandered about when on earth as a bloated mendicant, accompanied by satyrs. Bacchus wore a deer's skin; and Shivū is represented as holding a deer in his hand. The worship of the lingū, also, strongly resembles the worship of the phallus in honour of Bacchus. The sūnyasēe festival in honour of Shivū (see vol. i. p. 19.) appears to resemble much the orgies of Bacchus, especially in the behaviour of the devotees^r, who are said to have run up and down the streets with their hair disheveled, and with lighted torches in their hands. In the months Voishakhū and Kartikū, the lingū is worshipped daily in the numerous temples dedicated to this abomination throughout Bengal. It is difficult to restrain one's indignation at the shocking violation of every thing decent in this image; nor can it be ground of wonder, that a chaste woman, faithful to her husband, is scarcely to be found among all the millions of Hindoos, when their very temples are polluted with filthy images, and their acts of worship tend to inflame the mind with licentious ideas^s. Another form of Shivū is that of

^r A most singular coincidence appears to exist here betwixt the Hindoo and the Roman ceremonies.—These sūnyasēes, though taken from the lowest order, wear the poita as bramhūns during this festival. Kennett, in his *Roman Antiquities*, book v. p. 305, says, respecting the shews after a funeral, 'Though the exhibitors of these shews were private persons, yet during the time of the celebration, they were considered as of the highest rank and quality, having the honour to wear the Prætecta.'

^s I am credibly informed, that a Hindoo, once on a visit at a temple

Kalū-Bhoirūvū, in which form he cut off Brūmha's head, which is seen in one of his hands. A sect of mendicants, called *yogū-bhogū-vadēēs*, who wear a large stone inserted through an incision in each ear, live at the temples of this god, and are sometimes seen, with a prostitute in one hand, and a pan of hot coals in the other, with each of which (the representatives of pleasure and pain) they profess to be equally pleased. Another form of this god is that of *Mūha-kalū*, in which he appears as the *destroyer*. 'Mūha-kalū, as represented in the caverns of Elephanta,' says Mr. Paterson, 'has eight arms; in one hand he holds a human figure; in another, a sword or sacrificial axe; in a third, a basin of blood; and with a fourth he rings over it the sacrificial bell: two other arms are broken off, but with the two remaining he is drawing behind him a veil, which extinguishes the sun, and involves the whole universe in one undistinguished ruin. In the hieroglyphic of the Mūha Prūlūyū, (or grand consummation of all things,) Shivū is represented as trodden under foot by Mūha Kalēē^t, or Eternity. He is there deprived of his crescent, trident, and necklaces, to show that his dominion and powers are no more; and is blowing the tremendous horn, which announces the annihilation of all created things.'

4. *Indrū*. This is the king of heaven, and the infamous violator of the wife of his religious guide: he is painted as a yellow man, sitting on an elephant, with a thunder-bolt in one hand, and a club in the other; and, like Argus, is full of eyes. All the attributes of his image are only the signs of his office as a king. He has one annual festival, and is very famous in the

near Serampore, asked the officiating bramhūn to give him a proof that the idol was able to converse with him. The bramhūn entered the temple, shutting the door after him, and the visitor, astonished at immediately hearing voices, interrogated the priest respecting it, who solemnly affirmed from within, that it was Jūgūnnat'hū who was speaking;—but the visitor, determined to ascertain so interesting a fact, forced open the temple door, and—whom should he see, inquisitive reader, but the mistress of the officiating bramhūn?

^t This is the famous image worshipped at Kalēē-Ghatū, near Calcutta.

pooranūs for the number of wars and intrigues in which he has been engaged. His throne changes masters at the end of seventy-one yoogūs of the gods. Jupiter was called the king of heaven, and the Fulminator: Indrū's names, Divūs-pūtee and Vūjṛēē, are significant of similar offices.

5. *Yūmū*, the Indian Pluto, is a dark-green man, clothed in red, with inflamed eyes; he sits on a buffalo, has a crown on his head, and holds in his right hand a club with which he drives out the soul from the body, and punishes the wicked. This is his form of terror, as king of the souls of the dead; but he is also worshipped in a form less terrific, which he is said to assume when he passes a sentence of happiness on the meritorious. Beside his annual festival, he is worshipped on other occasions; and receives the homage of the Hindoos in their daily ablutions. There are several remarkable coincidences between *Yūmū* and Pluto, as will be seen by comparing the fables respecting the latter and those in vol. i. page 75. of this work: the images of both 'Grin horribly a ghastly smile.' Pluto had a rod in his hand; *Yūmū* is called *Dūndū-dhūrū*, because he holds in his hand the rod of punishment. *Yūmū* is the *shraddhū dévū*, or the regent of funeral rites; and the institution of funeral obsequies is ascribed to Pluto. The dead, in going to *Yūmū*'s judgment-hall, cross *Voitūrūnēē*, the Indian styx^u; the waters of which, like those of Phlegethon, the fourth river of hell which the dead were obliged to cross, are said to be boiling hot. *Yūmū* has several assistants, like Minos, who keep a register of human actions. There is something in the story inserted in vol. i. page 83, which seems to coincide with Pluto's being obliged to steal his wife Proserpine, because he could obtain no other goddess, his visage being so horrible and his habitation so gloomy. The Hindoos consider hell as situated at the southern extremity of the earth; the Greeks and Romans thought it was a large subterraneous spot in the earth.

^u This river encircled the infernal regions nine times: *Voitūrūnēē* encircles this hall six times.

6. *Gūnēshū*. A fat short red man, with four arms and an elephant's head, sitting on a rat. His corpulency is a type of Brūmha, as the aggregate of all things. In one hand he holds a bell, which is the pattern of a temple, and also points out that this god banishes fear; in another he holds a serpent-weapon, to show that he throws impediments in the way of the wicked; another grasps the hook by which elephants are guided, which points out that he guides the mind; and with the other he forbids fear. His elephant's head is a sign of the mystical sound *Om*, and the trunk is the type of the instrument with which clarified butter is poured on the fire at a sacrifice. The author of the *Roodrūyamūlū*, from whom this is extracted, assigns no reason for *Gūnēshū*'s riding on a rat. Though he has been compared to Janus, I find but two instances of coincidence betwixt them: every act of worship (*pōōja*) is preceded by an invocation to *Gūnēshū*^x; and men in business paint his image over the doors of their shops, or suspend it amongst their merchandize, to insure prosperity. *Gūnēshū* has been complimented as the god of wisdom; but the Hindoo deity presiding over knowledge, or wisdom, is *Sūrūswūtēē*, a goddess. *Gūnēshū* receives many honours from the Hindoos, and is considered as bountiful in bestowing wisdom and other favours, though there are no temples erected to his honour in Bengal. Those who adopt him as their guardian deity, are called *Ganūpūtyūs*.

7. *Kartikēyū* is the Indian Mars, or commander in chief to the gods. He has in some images one, and in others six faces; is of a yellow colour; and rides on the peacock, an incarnation of *Indrū*. In one hand he holds a bow, and in the other an arrow. He is worshipped as the giver of bodily strength.

8. *Sōōryū*, (the sun.) I do not find the least resemblance betwixt this Hindoo deity and Sol, either in their images or history. The Hindoos, in a most indelicate fable respecting this god, have described the twelve signs of the zodiac. *Yūmū*, the

^x 'In the Roman sacrifices, the priest always mentioned first the name of Janus.' *Kennett*, p. 85.

regent of death, is his son; and Chaya, a shadow, the name of one of his wives^y. The image of Sōōryū is that of a dark-red man, from whose body issue a thousand streams of light: he has three eyes, and four arms; in each of two of his hands he holds a water-lily, with another he is bestowing a blessing, and with the last forbidding fear. He sits on a red lotus, in a chariot drawn by seven horses. He is painted red, to show that his glory is like flame; his three eyes represent the day, evening, and night; and his four arms indicate, that in him are united *prūkritee* and *poorooshū*, or matter and spirit. One lotus explains the nature of emancipation, (*see Vishnoo*;) and the other, upon which the rays of Sōōryū are reflected, is a type of sound, which some Hindoo philosophers believe to be eternal. The red lotus represents the earth; his chariot, the measure of time; and the seven horses, the seven poetical measures of the *védūs*. The image of this god is never made, but the sun itself is worshipped daily; the *shalgramū* is also his constant representative in the *bramhinal* worship. The disciples of this god are called *Sourūs*.

9. *Ugnee*, the regent of fire, is represented as a corpulent man, riding on a goat, with copper-coloured eye-brows, beard, hair, and eyes; his belly is the colour of the dawn; he holds a spear in his right hand, and a bead-roll in his left; from his body issue a thousand streams of glory, and he has seven flaming tongues. His corpulency points out, that he grants the desires of his worshippers; the colour of his eye-brows, &c. represents the flame of the burnt-offering when it ascends of a copper-colour, at which time he who desires secular blessings offers his clarified butter; but he who desires emancipation, pours his offering on the fire when its colour is like that of the dawn. The goat teaches, that *Ugnee* devours all things; his spear, that he is almighty; and his bead-roll, that he is propitious. The rays of glory are to encourage the worshipper to expect that he

^y The *pooranūs* contain a fable respecting Sōōryū and his wife, which almost literally corresponds with the filthy story of Neptune and Ceres, when the latter turned herself into a mare.

shall obtain the greatest blessings from this god. Ugnee has neither temples nor images consecrated to him, but has a service in the daily ceremonies of the bramhũns; and one class of his worshippers, called sagnikũ bramhũns, preserve a perpetual fire like the vestal virgins*. He presides over sacrifices, and is called the mouth of the gods.

10. *Pũvĩnũ*, the god of the winds, and the messenger of the gods, is represented as a white man, sitting on a deer, holding in his right hand the hook used by the driver of an elephant. He is painted white, to shew that he preserves life. The deer represents the swiftness of his flight; the elephant driver's hook explains his power over the body. He is worshipped daily, but has neither separate festival, image, nor temple. I can find little or no resemblance betwixt this god and Mercury.

11. *Vũroonũ*, the Indian Neptune, is a white man, sitting on a sea animal, having a serpent-weapon in his right hand. He is painted white, to shew that he satisfies the living; and he wields a terrific weapon, to point out, that he is approached with fear by the worshipper. His name is repeated in the daily worship of the bramhũns, but he has neither public festival nor temple.

12. *Sũmoodrũ*, the sea, is worshipped by the Hindoos when they visit the sea, as well as at the different festivals, and on the sixth day after the birth of a child.

13. *Prit'hivẽẽ*, the earth, is worshipped daily by the Hindoos. She is a form of *Bhũgũvũtẽẽ*, and may be called the Indian Ceres. The Hindoos have divided the earth into ten parts, and assigned a deity to each. These are, *Indrũ*, *Ugnee*, *Yũmũ*,

* There seems to be no order of females among the Hindoos resembling these virgins; but many Hindoo women, at the total wane of the moon, to fulfil a vow, watch for twenty-four hours over a lamp made with clarified butter, and prevent its being extinguished till the time for the appearance of the new moon.

Noiritü, Vüroonü, Vayoo, Koovérü, Eeshü, Brümha, and Unüntü.

14. *The heavenly bodies.* It is a remarkable fact, that almost all heathen nations have fallen into the worship of the heavenly bodies. Perhaps the evident influence which the sun and moon have over the seasons and the vegetable kingdom, might, in the primeval ages, lead men to make them objects of worship: after the introduction of judicial astrology, this species of idolatry becomes less surprising. Whatever may be the antiquity of the védüs, it is very plain, that the worship of the sun, moon, and other planets is there inculcated: many of the forms of praise and petition in those books, are addressed to the heavenly bodies; and to this day the worship of all the planets in one service, and of different planets on separate occasions, has place among the Hindoos.

Rüvee^a, the sun. See the article Söörü. *Somü^b, the moon.* We do not perceive the least agreement betwixt this god and Diana. The Hindoo feasts are regulated by the revolutions of the moon, but Somü is not greatly honoured in the Hindoo mythology, being esteemed a malignant planet, as is also *Müngülü^c, or Mars.* *Booddhü^d, or Mercury,* is a fortunate planet; and so is *Vrihüspütee^e, or Jupiter,* who is the preceptor of the gods. *Shookrü^f, or Venus,* preceptor to the giants, is also a fortunate planet. This god is represented as blind of one eye. *Shünee^g, or Saturn,* the son of Söörü, an evil planet. *Rahoo* and *Kétoo,* the ascending and descending nodes. The planets are not honoured with temples, images, or festivals in Bengal. When hope or fear, respecting their benign or malignant influence, is excited in the mind of a Hindoo, he is drawn or driven to worship them.

^a From this god the first day of the week is named Rüvee-varü, as Sunday derives its name from the Sun: day and varü are synonymous.

^b Hence Somü-varü, Monday.

^c Müngülü-varü, Tuesday.

^d Booddh-varü, Wednesday.

^e Vrihüspütee-varü, Thursday.

^f Shookrü-varü, Friday.

^g Shünee-varü, Saturday.

15. *Doorga*. The image of this goddess and that of Minerva, in one or two instances, exhibit a pretty strong resemblance: both are described as fond of arms; and it is remarkable, that *Doorga* derives her name from the giant *Doorgü*, whom she slew, as *Pallas* (*Minerva*) obtained hers from the giant *Pallas*, whom she destroyed. She resembles *Minerva* also as a goddess difficult of access, which is one signification of the name *Doorga*. Sir W. Jones says, ‘As the mountain-born goddess, or *Parvütēē*, she has many properties of the Olympian *Juno*: her majestic deportment, high spirit, and general attributes are the same; and we find her both on *Mount Koilasü*, and at the banquets of the deities, uniformly the companion of her husband. One circumstance in the parallel is extremely singular: she is usually attended by her son *Kartikéyü*, who rides on a peacock; and in some drawings, his own robe seems to be spangled with eyes: to which must be added that, in some of her temples, a peacock, without a rider, stands near her image.’ The image of *Doorga* is that of a yellow female with ten arms, sitting on a lion. The weapons she wields, the trident, the scimitar, the discus, the arrow, the spear, the club, the bow, the serpent-weapon, the hook for guiding an elephant, and the axe, are to point out, that with these ten arms and weapons she protects the ten points. She has one foot on *Mühéshü*, a giant, to shew that she subdues the enemies of her worshippers; and she sits on a lion, a form of *Vishnoo*, as the giver of success to her worshippers, and as exciting fear in their enemies. The quarrels of this goddess with *Shivü*, her husband, strongly remind us of those betwixt *Jupiter* and *Juno*, arising from the jealousy of the latter. The festivals in honour of *Doorga* and of *Krishnü* draw the whole Hindoo population to the temples, while those in honour of other gods are comparatively neglected. Before the temples of this goddess, thousands of victims are annually slaughtered, and offered to her image. She is not merely honoured as *Doorga*, but, under other names, distinct temples, images, festivals, and ceremonies have been instituted. *Doorga*, as has been already observed, is also the representative of matter in the creation of the universe, and in this character she is called *Prü-*

kritee^h. Her wars with the giants also add to her fame, and make her extremely popular among the Hindoos: she is adopted by many, who take the name of *shaktüs*ⁱ, as their guardian deity. In Bengal, the greater number of bramhüns are shaktüs: in the western and southern provinces this sect is less numerous.

16. *Kalee*, the Indian Diana Taurica. Though this is another form of Doorga, her fame is so great, that it seems necessary to devote a few lines exclusively to her. The dark image of this goddess is a truly horrid figure: her hair is disheveled; her tongue hangs out; she holds in one hand a scimitar, in another a giant's scull, with another she forbids fear, and with the last is bestowing a blessing. Her colour is that by which time is designated, and she stands upon her husband, the destroyer, to keep him in subjection till the time of the universal conflagration, when, with the eye in the centre of his forehead, he will burn the universe. Her four arms represent the four védüs; the two inspiring terror point out those portions of the védü which relate to the destruction of enemies and the government of the world, and the other two allude to those parts of the védü which belong to devotion. Her disheveled hair represents the clouds, and intimates too that time has neither beginning nor end. Her tongue is the representative of lightning. She exhibits altogether the appearance of a drunken frantic fury. Yet this is the goddess whom thousands adore, on whose altars thousands of victims annually bleed, and whose temple at Kalēē-ghatü, near Calcutta, is the resort of Hindoos from all parts of India. This temple, it is said, frequently receives presents from persons of the highest rank, and not unfrequently from persons called Christians. There are two things respecting Kalēē which remind us of Laverna: she is the protectress of thieves, and her image at Kalēē-ghatü is a head without a body. Another form of this goddess, under the name of Siddhëshwüree, is to be seen in clay temples all over Bengal. Human victims, it is said, have often been immolated on the altars of Kalēē and Siddhëshwüree.

^h Literally, the chief, or nature.

ⁱ Shaktü means energy.

17. *Lūkshmēē*, the goddess of fortune, is the wife of Vishnoo: she is said to have been produced at the churning of the sea, as Venus was said to be born of the froth of the sea. At her birth, all the gods were enamoured of her. She is painted yellow, with a water-lily in her right hand; (in which form she is worshipped frequently by Hindoo women;) but no bloody sacrifices are offered to her. The Hindoos avoid all payments of money on the Thursday, (*Lūkshmēē-varū*,) from the fear of offending this goddess.

18. *Sūrūswūtēē*, the goddess of learning, another wife of Vishnoo. She is painted white, and stands on the water-lily. In some images she is seen holding a lute; and in others as possessed of three eyes, with a fan in one hand and a book in the other. Her colour is to point out, that she is the source of wisdom; the lute reminds the worshipper that she is the author of melody; her three eyes represent the three védūs; the book and pen obviously belong to her character as the goddess of learning. I find no goddess in the Roman or Grecian pantheon who resembles her. She has an annual festival, when clay images are set up, and worshipped all over Bengal. Some of her worshippers, on the last day of the festival, dance naked before the procession of the image through the streets. Even prostitutes, at this festival, make an image of this goddess, and set it up near their houses, to draw the spectators to their brothels. On this day students, merchants, and others, refuse to touch a pen; for the Hindoos ascribe their ability to read, write, and even to speak, to the favour of *Sūrūswūtēē*.

19. *Shēētūla*, the goddess who cools the body when afflicted with the small-pox, receives many honours from the lower orders of Hindoos, among whom the ravages of the small-pox are often dreadful. This goddess is also worshipped to procure the removal of cutaneous diseases.

20. *Mūnūsa*, the queen of the snakes, or she who protects men

from their fatal-bite. The lower orders crowd to the three annual festivals held in honour of this goddess.

21. *Shūsh't'hēē*, the goddess of fecundity. She is honoured with six annual festivals, celebrated chiefly by females. Her image is that of a yellow woman, sitting on a cat, and nursing a child; though, in general, a rough stone, painted on the top, and placed under a tree, is the object worshipped.

These may be considered as the *celestial deities* worshipped by the Hindoos. The *terrestrial goddesses* are, *Sēēta*, the wife of *Ramū^k*; *Radha*, the mistress of *Krishnū*; *Rookminēē* and *Sūtyū-bhama*, the wives of *Krishnū*; and *Soobhūdra*, the sister of *Jūgūnnat'hū^l*. The *terrestrial gods* are the following:—

1. *Krishnū* resembles Apollo in his licentious intrigues; in his being a herdsman^m, and an archer; in his destroying a dreadful serpent; in his love of music; and in the celebrity to which he attained. *Krishnū*'s image is that of a black man, with a flute in his hand. His colour points out, that he fills the mind with sensual desires, and the flute designates him as the author of musical sounds. Apollo had in one hand a harp, and in the other a shield of arrows. The history of *Krishnū* is chiefly found in the *Shrēē-Bhagūvūtū*; the outline of which will be seen in vol. i. p. 193, &c. Several festivals in honour of this god are held annually, at which times the greatest licentiousness prevails among all ranks. A great proportion of the Hindoo population in Bengal are devoted to *Krishnūⁿ*. His intrigues with the

^k This goddess, it is said, was dug out of the ground by king *Jūnūkū*, when he was ploughing his field. A boy who was ploughed up out of the ground among the Tuscans, gave rise to the order of Roman priests, whose business it was to divine from appearances in the annual sacrifice.

^l It does not appear that *Jūgūnnat'hū* was ever married.

^m The *pooranūs* contain a story of this god much resembling that of Mercury's stealing a cow from Apollo. In the Hindoo fable, *Brūmha* is the thief.

ⁿ Sometimes Hindoos are seen licking up the very dust of the place

milk-maids, and especially with Radha, his favourite mistress, are familiar to every Hindoo, being incorporated into their popular songs, and the image of Radha being placed by that of Krishnū in many of the temples. Under several other names Krishnū is worshipped, to which forms separate temples have been erected; among the rest to Gopalū, the herdsman; to Valū-gopalū, the infant Gopalū; to Gopēē-nat'hū, the lord of the milk-maids. Krishnū is one of the ten incarnations of Vishnoo. The Rev. Mr. Maurice calls him 'the amiable Krishnū!'

2. *Jūgūnnat'hū*, another deified hero, complimented with the title of lord of the world, a form of Vishnoo. He is honoured with several annual festivals, but the car festival is the most popular. Imitations of his ponderous car abound in many of the large towns in Bengal^o: that in Orissa, connected with the ancient temple erected in honour of this god, has crushed to death hundreds of victims, perhaps thousands, and immolates a number every year. This god receives the homage of pilgrims from all parts of India, for whose accommodation roads have

where the crowd are celebrating the praises of Krishnū; and others are said to faint with joy on these occasions. In memory of Krishnū's lewd conduct with the milk-maids in the forest of Vrindavūnū, persons of property sometimes spend a day in the fields, and entertain their friends.

° Krishnū-vūsoo gave to the temple of *Jūgūnnat'hū*, near Serampore, an immense car, which could not cost less than four or five thousand roopees. He also added an allowance of six roopees a day for the expenses of the worship of this idol. Gourū-mūllikū, a goldsmith of Calcutta, who gave the interest of his mother's weight in gold to different temples, added six roopees more to the daily offerings at this temple; but these two benefactors, perceiving that the bramhūns of the temple, instead of expending these sums in offerings to the god, and in alms to strangers, applied the greater part to their private use, reduced the six roopees to one roopee four anas a day. To extort more money from the donors, the bramhūns of this temple, at two succeeding festivals, prevented the car from proceeding to an adjoining temple in which the donors were interested, pretending that the god was angry with them for their parsimony, and would not go.

been cut, and lodging-houses erected. Such, however, is the great mortality among the pilgrims, that a Hindoo of property always makes his will before he sets out on this journey, and takes a most affecting farewell of his disconsolate relations. Southey's description^p, in his 'Curse of Kehama,' though not literally correct, conveys to the mind much of the horror which a Christian spectator of the procession of the car cannot but feel. Mr. Paterson finds in the images of this god, and his brother and sister, which are worshipped together, an hieroglyphic of the mystical word *Om*.

3. *Ramū*, a deified monarch, and the hero of the *Ramayānū*, comes in for a considerable share of the wretched devotion of the Hindoos, especially in the western provinces. His history, found in *Valmēēkee's* epic poem, is partly before the public. He is adored as the seventh Hindoo incarnation; has an annual festival, and is daily worshipped in the temples dedicated to him, his brother, and his friend *Hūnoomanū*; in which temples he appears as a green man, with a bow and arrows in his hands, sitting on a throne, having *Sēēta* on his left: his brother *Luksh-mūnū* holds a white umbrella over his head, and *Hūnoomanū* stands before him as his servant with joined hands. He is considered as a beneficent deity. Some think that *Ramū* was deified

P ' A thousand pilgrims strain,
 Arm, shoulder, breast, and thigh, with might and main,
 To drag that sacred wain,
 And scarce can draw along the enormous load.
 Prone fall the frantic votaries in its road,
 And, calling on the god,
 Their self-devoted bodies there they lay
 To pave his chariot way;
 On *Jūgūnat'h* they call,
 The ponderous car rolls on, and crushes all.
 Through blood and bones it ploughs its dreadful path;
 Groans rise unheard; the dying cry,
 And death and agony
 Are trodden under foot by yon mad throng,
 Who follow close, and thrust the deadly wheels along.'

on account of a successful attack on Ceylon, when he was king of Mut'hoora.

4. *Choitūnyū*, i. e. the wise, a form of Krishnū; the god of a sect of voiragēes, whose leader was a religious mendicant. His most famous temple in Bengal is at Ugrū-dwēepū, where an annual festival is held, and to which crowds resort from all parts of Bengal. The bramhūns despise this sect.

5. *Vishvū-kīrmū*, the son of Brūmha, as architect of the gods, may be regarded as the Hindoo Vulcan. He is worshipped at an annual festival, the implements of each artificer being the representative of the god. He employs no Cyclops with one eye, but has a workman named Mayū, a giant, who is capable of exhibiting all manner of illusive edifices.

6. *Kamū-dévū*, the Indian Cupid. This god is also said to be the son of Brūmha: he is painted as a beautiful youth, carrying a bow and arrow of flowers. He has an annual festival, but his image is not made; nor does this festival command much celebrity. Petitions are addressed to him by the bride and bridegroom anxious for offspring.

7. *Sūtyū Narayūnū*. I have not discovered the origin of this idol: the name implies that he is the true Vishnoo. He is worshipped frequently in the houses of the rich, from the desire of insuring prosperity.

8. *Pūnchanūnū*, a form of Shivū, worshipped by the lower orders, who consider him as the destroyer of children. The image used as his representative is a misshapen stone, anointed, painted, and placed under the vūtū and other trees.

9. *Dhūrmū-t'hakoorū*, another form of Shivū, held in much the same estimation as Pūnchanūnū.

10. *Kaloo-rayū*, the god of forests, another form of Shivū.

He is painted as sitting on a tiger, and carrying a bow and arrows: is worshipped by the wood-cutters in the forests, to insure protection from wild beasts.

11. *Deified Beings in strange shapes.*—*Urdhū-narēeshwūrū*. This compound deity is Shivū and Doorga united in one body. The fable respecting this singular transformation will be found in vol. i. p. 239. Religious worship is paid to this idol.—*Krishnū-Kalēē*. In this image of Krishnū and Kalēē united in one body, vice itself is personified and worshipped. See vol. i. p. 240.—*Hūree-Hūrū*. Another compound deity, Vishnū and Shivū. The worship paid to these idols appears to owe its origin to stories in the pooranūs; but the original idea, meant to be conveyed by two of them, no doubt, was, that the Great Spirit and matter are one.

12. *The worship of Human Beings.* The Hindoos worship their spiritual guides; also bramhūns, and their wives and daughters: and, among the vamacharēēs, women of the lowest cast, and even prostitutes, are worshipped with rites too abominable to be recorded. See vol. i. p. 247.

13. *The worship of Beasts.* The cow, as a form of Bhūgūvūtēē, is an object of worship, and receives the homage of the Hindoos at an annual festival^a: (see vol. i. p. 249.) *Hūnoomanū*, the monkey, has also been placed among the gods, as a form of Shivū. Temples to this god are to be seen, and in some places his image is worshipped, daily; he is even chosen by many as their guardian deity. *Hūnoomanū* bears some resemblance to Pan, and like

^a The very dung of the cow is eaten as an atonement for sin, and, with its urine, is used in worship. A Hindoo does not carry any thing out of his house in the morning, till he has rubbed his door-way with cow-dung. Notwithstanding this reverence, the bullocks employed in carrying burdens and at the plough, are used more cruelly by the Hindoos than any other animals. 'The Athenians and almost all other nations thought it a very great crime to kill the ox, insomuch that the offender was thought to deserve death.' *Potter's Antiquities of Greece*, vol. i. p. 217.

him owes his birth to the god of the winds. The *dog*, the *jackal*, and a number of other animals, have also places among the Hindoo deities, though they are not greatly honoured.

14. *Worship of Birds.* Gūroorū, the carrier of Vishnoo, half a bird and half a man, has received deification, as well as his brother Uroonū, the charioteer of Vishnoo. Jūtayoo, another bird, the friend of Ramū, receives divine honours; as do the eagle of Coromandel, (said to be an incarnation of Doorga,) the wag-tail, the peacock, the goose, and the owl; but the honours they receive are not of the highest kind.

15. *Worship of Trees.* The Hindoos do not seem ever to have consecrated groves, but several trees they esteem sacred. Toolū-sēē, a female raised to deity by Vishnoo, was cursed by Lūkshmēē, his wife, in a fit of jealousy, and turned into the tree of this name; which the Hindoos preserve with great care near their houses, erect pillars to its honour^r, esteem its leaves and wood sacred, and with the latter make the beads with which they repeat the names of their guardian deities. Several other trees receive almost an equal homage: (see p. 263.) It is considered as a great sin among the Hindoos for any member of a family to cut down trees planted by an ancestor, and the misfortunes of many a family have been ascribed to such an act of indiscretion.

16. *River worship.* The Hindoos not only reverence their rivers, but actually worship them, dividing them into male and female deities. But Gūnga, (the Ganges,) both in their poems, their pooranūs, and in the superstitious customs of the natives, appears to rank highest among the river deities. She is declared to have descended from Vishnoo's heaven, the anniversary of which event is celebrated by particular festivities. The most extravagant things are related in the pooranūs respecting the

^r The heads of these pillars, which commonly open like a cup, are filled with earth, and the plant is placed in them. 'The Romans and Grecians,' says Potter, 'consecrated certain trees to their gods.'

purifying nature of these waters; and several works have been written to extol the saving properties of the Ganges^s. Its waters are carried to immense distances; every thing they touch becomes purified; crowds of Hindoos perform their worship on the banks of the river daily, after purifying themselves in its stream; the sick are laid on its banks, expecting recovery from the mere sight of this goddess; and it is reckoned a great calamity not to die within view of Gūnga. Many other rivers receive the honours of divine worship, as will be seen in page 278.

17. *Worship of Fish.* Even the finny tribes are honoured by the Hindoos, though the worship paid to them is of an inferior nature.

18. *The worship of Books* is very common among this people. The lower orders have such a profound respect for a book, that they think every thing in such a form must be divine. On several occasions a book is converted into an image, and worshipped with all the forms used before the most popular idol.

19. *Worship of Stones.* The shalūgramū, as a form of Vishnoo, is more frequently worshipped than any other idol in India^t, not excepting the lingū itself; which perhaps ought to be placed next, and which is also a stone. The representatives of Pūn-

^s The Gūnga-vakya-vūlēē, &c.

^t ‘The shalūgramūs are black stones, found in a part of the Gündükēē river, within the limits of Nepal. They are mostly round, and are commonly perforated in one or more places by worms, or, as the Hindoos believe, by Vishnoo in the shape of a reptile. According to the number of perforations, and of spiral curves in each, the stone is supposed to contain Vishnoo in various characters. For example, such a stone perforated in one place only, with four spiral curves in the perforation, and with marks resembling a cow’s foot, and a long wreath of flowers, contains Lūkshmēē-Narayūnū. In like manner stones are found in the Nūrmūda, which are considered as types of Shivū, and are called Vanū-Lingū. The shalūgramū is found, upon trial, not to be calcareous: it strikes fire with steel, and scarcely at all effervesces with acids.’ *Asiatic Researches*, vol vii. p. 240.

chanūnū and other gods are shapeless stones. Many images of idols sold in the markets are made of stone, and worshipped.

20. *A log of wood.* The pedal with which rice is cleansed from the husk has also been raised to godship by the Hindoos. See vol. i. p. 287.

Such are the objects adored by the Hindoos. Such is the deplorable state into which the mind continues to sink, after it has once renounced the doctrine of the UNITY of GOD. Divine Worship is confessedly the highest act of reverence and homage of which man is capable. How shocking then, how afflicting to a philanthropic mind, to see man prostrated before a beast, or a log of wood! How greatly is the horror increased, when this prostration of intellect respects many millions!

I have repeatedly conversed with learned Hindoos on the use of idols in worship: the best account I have ever received may amount to this.—God is every where; this is allowed, but his spirituality perplexes the mind. To collect and fix the ideas on the object of adoration, therefore, an image is chosen; into which image, by the power of incantations, the deity is imagined to be drawn. Hence, in dedicating an image, they call upon the god to come and dwell in it. I have urged in reply, that if this were the whole end to be answered, any image might do^u, but that I saw amongst them many sorts of idols. To this the bramhūn says, ‘God has made himself known in these forms, and directed these various images to be made, that men may be fascinated and drawn to the love of worship; that none of these images are intended to exhibit the natural perfections of God, but his actions when incarnate; and that images are only necessary while men continue in a rude state, and may be laid aside by those who can attain to devotion by means of rational speculation.’ This is the best apology I have obtained for the worship

^u They admit this: a pan of water is indeed often substituted for an idol.

of idols. Yet, surely, instead of elevating the mind, and carrying it to a Being so glorious as God, images debase a subject so sublime, and destroy all reverence for Him, who is 'glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders.' Images of God are therefore highly offensive, and their makers and worshippers justly expose themselves to the cutting reproof of Isaiah:—'To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare to him? Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: all nations before him are as nothing, and are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity.' But that idols are not necessary, even to the rude and ignorant, let the experience of every protestant country bear witness. Where shall we find piety more elevated, or morals more correct, even among individuals in the lowest orders of society, than in our own land?

But what shall we say, when many of these idols are monstrous personifications of vice; and when it is a fact, that not a single virtuous idea is ever communicated by any of them? The image of Kalēē exhibits a female with inflamed eyes, standing on the body of her husband, her hair disheveled, slaving the blood of her enemies down her bosom, her tongue hanging from her mouth, wearing a necklace of skulls, and holding a skull in the left hand, and a sword in the right. Another image, that of Krishnū-Kalēē, exhibits Krishnū and Radha, his mistress, united in one body, to conceal Radhā's infidelity from her husband. Another image is the lingū! Another that of a monkēy, an incarnation of 'the great god' Shivū; the offspring of the god of the winds by a female monkey^x! The image of Doorga is that of a female warrior: and one form of this goddess is that of a female so athirst for blood, that she is represented as cutting off her own head; and the severed head, with the mouth distended, is seen devouring the blood streaming from the trunk. This goddess stands upon two other deities in an attitude so abominably indecent that it cannot be described: the common form of

^x Pan is said to have been the son of Mercury.

Kalēē, standing on her husband Shivū, has a secret meaning, well known to a Hindoo, but which is so indelicate that even they, licentious as they are, dare not make it according to the genuine meaning of the fable to which it belongs^y. Some of the formulas used at the festival in honour of this goddess, called the Shyama-pōōja, relate to things which can never become the subject of description; but perhaps in this concealed state they are more pernicious than if painted, and exhibited to the open gaze of the mob. To this it may be added, that amidst all the numerous idols worshipped by the Hindoos, there is not one to represent any of the *Virtues*. In this respect, the Hindoo mythology sinks far below the European; for the Greeks and Romans adored Virtue, Truth, Piety, Chastity, Clemency, Mercy, Justice, Faith, Hope, and Liberty, and consecrated images and temples to these deities. Among the Hindoos, the most innocent part of the system, and that which existed in the purest ages, was the worship of the primary elements, the adoration of inanimate matter!

The manifest effect of idolatry in this country, as held up to thousands of Christian spectators, is an immersion into the grossest moral darkness, and a universal corruption of manners. The Hindoo is taught, that the image is really God, and the heaviest judgments are denounced against him, if he dare to suspect that the image is nothing more than the elements of which it is composed. The Tūntrū-sarū declares, that such an unbeliever will sink into the regions of torment. In the apprehensions of the people in general, therefore, the idols are real deities; they occupy the place of God, and receive all the homage, all the fear, all the service, and all the honours which HE so justly claims. The government of God is subverted, and all the moral effects arising from the knowledge of his perfections, and his claims upon his rational creatures, are completely lost.

^y Hindoos of the baser sort may be seen whispering to each other before this image, and dilating on that which is too filthy for *them* to utter in an audible voice.

It is a fact too, that the festivals in honour of the gods have the most pernicious effects on the minds of the people. During the ceremonies of worship before the image, the spectators are very few, and these feel no interest whatever in the mummery going forward; and were it not for those who come to pay a visit of ceremony to the image, and to bring their offerings, the temple would be as little crowded on festival, as on common days: but as soon as the well-known sound of the drum is heard, calling the people to the midnight orgies, the dance and the song, whole multitudes assemble, and almost tread one upon another; and their joy keeps pace with the number of loose women present, and the broad obscenity of the songs. Gopalū-Türkkalūnkarū, a pūndit employed in the Serampore printing-office, and a very respectable man among the Hindoos, avowed to a friend of mine, that the only attractives on these occasions were the women of ill-fame, and the filthy songs and dances; that these songs were so abominable, that a man of character, even amongst them, was ashamed of being present; that if ever he (Gopalū) remained, he concealed himself in a corner of the temple. He added, that a song was scarcely tolerated which did not contain the most marked allusions to unchastity; while those which were so abominable that no person could repeat them out of the temple, received the loudest plaudits². All this is done in the very face of the idol; nor does the thought, 'Thou God seest me,' ever produce the slightest pause in these midnight revels. In open day, and in the most public streets of a large town, I have seen men entirely naked, dancing with unblushing effrontery before the idol, as it was carried in triumphant procession, encouraged by the smiles and eager gaze of the bramhūns. Yet sights even worse than these, and such as can never be described by the pen of a Christian writer, are exhibited on the rivers and in the public roads, to thousands of spectators, at the

² Sometimes the Hindoos open a subscription to defray the expense of a grand act of worship in honour of some idol. If 400 roopees be subscribed on such an occasion, I am assured, that 300 will be spent on the songs and dancing-girls.

Doorga festival^a, the most popular and most crowded of all the Hindoo festivals in Bengal; and which closes with libations to the gods so powerful, as to produce general intoxication. What must be the state of morals in a country, when its religious institutions and public shows, at which the whole population is present, thus sanctify vice, and carry the multitude into the very gulph of depravity and ruin!

There is another feature in this system of idolatry, which increases its pernicious effects on the public manners:—The history of these gods is a highly coloured representation of their wars, quarrels, and licentious intrigues; which are held up in the images, recitations, songs, and dances at the public festivals. At the separate recitations, which are accompanied with something of our pantomime, these incredible and most indecent fables are made still more familiar to the people; so familiar indeed, that allusions to them are to be perceived in the most common forms of speech. Many works of a pernicious tendency in the European languages are not very hurtful, because they are too scarce and expensive to be read by the poor; but the authors of the Hindoo mythology have taken care, that the quarrels and revels of the gods and goddesses shall be held up to the imitation of the whole community.

In some of these histories and pantomimes Shivü is represented as declaring to Lükshmēē, that he would part with all the merit of his works for the gratification of a criminal passion; Brümha as burning with lust towards his own daughter; Krishnü as living with the wife of another, murdering a washerman and stealing his clothes, and sending his friend Yoodhist'hirü to the regions of torment by causing him to utter a falsehood; Indrü and Chündrü are seen as the paramours of the wives of their spiritual guides.—But these stories are so numerous in the poo-

^a The author has more than once been filled with alarm, as this idolatrous procession has passed his house, lest his children should go to the windows, and see the gross obscenity exhibited by the dancers.

ranūs, that it seems unnecessary to drag more of them to light. The thing to be deplored is, that the Hindoo objects of worship were themselves monsters of vice.

Painful as this is, it is not all: there is a numerous and growing sect among the Hindoos in Bengal, and perhaps in other provinces, who, in conformity with the rules prescribed in the works called Tūntrū, practise the most abominable rites. The proselytes to this sect are chiefly bramhūns, and are called vama-charēēs. I have given some account of them in vol. i. p. 247. and vol. ii. p. 92. and should have declined blotting these pages with any further allusion to these unutterable abominations, had I not omitted in those accounts an article which I had prepared, and which throws much additional light on the practices of a sect so singularly corrupt.

The rules of this sect are to be found more or less in most of the Tūntrūs; but particularly in the Nēēlū, Roodrū-yamūlū, Yonee, and Unnūda-kūlpū. In these works the writers have arranged a number of Hindoo sects as follows:—Védacharēēs, Voishnūvacharēēs, Shoivacharēēs, Dūkshinacharēēs, Vamacharēēs, Siddhantacharēēs, and Koulacharēēs; each rising in succession, till the most perfect sect is the Koulacharū. When a Hindoo wishes to enter into this sect, he sends for a person who has been already initiated, and who is well acquainted with the forms of initiation; and presenting to him garments, ornaments, &c. begs him to become his religious guide. The teacher then places this disciple near him for three days, and instructs him in the ceremonies of the sect: at the close of which period, the disciple spreads some loose soil on the floor of the house in which the ceremonies of initiation are to be performed; and sows a small quantity of barley, and two kinds of pease, in this soil, sprinkling water upon it. He next proceeds to perform some parts of the ten ceremonies practised by the regular Hindoos from the time of birth to that of marriage: after which he makes a declaration, that he has from that period renounced all the ceremonies of the old religion, and is delivered from their

yoke; and as a token of joy celebrates what is called the Vridhhee shraddhū. All these ceremonies are to be performed in the day; what follows is to be done in darkness: and therefore, choosing the darkest part of the night, the seed sown in the house having sprung up, the disciple and his spiritual (it would not be too harsh to say infernal) guide enter the house, with eight men, (vamacharēēs,) and eight females, (a dancing-girl, a weaver's daughter, a woman of ill-fame, a washerwoman, a barber's wife or daughter, a bramhūnēē, the daughter of a land-owner, and a milkmaid.) Each of the vamacharēēs is to place by his side one of the females, and the teacher and his disciple are to sit close to each other. The teacher now informs his disciple, that from henceforward he is not to indulge shame, nor dislike to any thing, nor prefer one plan to another, nor regard ceremonial cleanness or uncleanness, nor cast; and that, though he may freely enjoy all the pleasures of sense, the mind must be fixed on his guardian deity: that is, he is neither to be an epicure nor an ascetic, but to blend both in his character; and to make the pleasures of sense, that is, wine and women, the medium of obtaining absorption into Brūmha; since women are the representatives of the wife of Cupid, and wine prevents the senses from going astray. A pan of spirits, or of water mixed with spirits, is placed near each man and woman; and in the centre another pan of spirits, different kinds of flesh, (of which that of the cow makes a part,) rice, fruits, &c. and upon each of the eight pans different branches of trees, and garlands of red flowers are placed; the pans also are to be marked with red paint: all these are surrounded with eighty pounds of flour formed into different colours. A pan of intoxicating beverage, called siddhee, is next consecrated; of which each partakes: after which they chew the panū leaf. Next, before all the things placed in the centre of the room, the spiritual guide rehearses the common ceremonies of worship, addressing them to any one of the female deities who happens to be the guardian deity of this disciple. The vessels from which the company are to drink, and the offerings, are next consecrated: these vessels may be formed of earth, copper, brass, silver, gold, or stone, the cocoa-

nut, or a human skull; but the latter is to be preferred. The spiritual guide then gives as much as a wine glass of spirits to each female, as the representative of the divine energy; and the men drink what they leave. At this time the spiritual guide declares, that in the sūtyū yoogū the people were directed in their religious duties by the védūs, in the trétū by the writings of the learned, in the dwapūrū by the different pooranūs, and, in the kūlee yoogū, the tūntrūs are the only proper guides to duty. As if well pleased with this sentiment, each one of the company now drinks two more glasses of the spirits. The disciple next worships each male and female separately, applying to them the names of Bhoirūvū and Bhoirūvēe, titles given to Shivū and Doorga, and presents to each of them spirits, meat-offerings, garments, ornaments, &c.; after which the spiritual guide offers a burnt-sacrifice, with the flesh and other meat-offerings, pouring on them, as they burn, clarified butter: the disciple also repeats the same ceremony. The eight females now anoint the disciple by sprinkling upon him, with the branches which were placed on the pan, spirits and water; and after mixing together the whole of the spirits, or spirits and water, from all the pans, the spiritual guide, with all the branches, again sprinkles the disciple: to whom he declares that he has now, for the good of his soul, instructed him, according to the commandment of the great god Shivū, in all the ceremonies belonging to the profession of a vama-charēe; urging him, in practising these ceremonies, to keep his mind on Shivū, and that he will be happy after death: at the close, he causes him to drink the liquor thus mixed, repeating separate incantations. During his initiation he is not to drink so as to appear intoxicated, or to cause his mind to wander; but having habituated himself to a small quantity, he may take more, till he falls down in a state of intoxication; still however so as to rise again after a short interval: after which he may continue drinking the nectar, till he falls down completely overcome, and remains in this state of joy, thinking upon his guardian deity. He is now known as an Uvūdhōōtū, that is, as one who has renounced all secular affairs; and receives a new name, perhaps Anūndū-nat'hū, or the joyous.

He is to drink spirits with all of the same profession ; to sleep constantly in a house of ill-fame ; and to eat of every thing he pleases, and with all casts indiscriminately. The next thing is to offer a burnt-sacrifice ; after which the spiritual guide and the guests are dismissed with presents, and the new disciple spends the night with an infamous female. These vamacharēes adore the sex, and carefully avoid offending a woman. They also practise the most debasing rites, using the heads of persons who have been guilty of suicide, also when sitting on a dead body, and while naked and in the presence of a naked female.—It might seem impossible to trace ceremonies gross as these to any principle except that of moral depravity ; but the authors of this system attempt to reconcile it with the pursuit of future happiness. The reader is aware that the regular Hindoo theologians attribute all the vices to the passions, and consider their subjugation, or annihilation, as essential to final beatitude ; they therefore aim at the accomplishment of this object by means of severe bodily austerities. The vamacharēes profess to seek the same object, not by avoiding temptation, and starving the body, but by blunting the edge of the passions with excessive indulgence. They profess to triumph over the regular Hindoos, reminding them that *their* ascetics are safe only in forests, and while keeping a perpetual fast ; but that *they* subdue their passions in the very presence of temptation.

Thus, that which to the Hindoo should be divine worship, is the great source of impiety and corruption of manners : and, instead of returning from his temple, or from religious services, improved in knowledge, grieved for his moral deficiencies, and anxious to cultivate a greater regard to the interests of morality and religion, his passions are inflamed, and his mind polluted to such a degree, that he carries the pernicious lessons of the temple, or the festival, into all the walks of private life. His very religion becomes his greatest bane, and where he should have drank of the water of life, he swallows the poison that infallibly destroys him.

In conversation with a learned bramhūn, in the year 1813, he acknowledged to the author, that, at present, reverence for the gods made no part of the attractions to the public festivals. One man celebrates a festival to preserve himself from disgrace, another to procure the applauses of his countrymen, and a third for the sake of the songs, dances, &c. This bramhūn instanced cases of images being made without any reference to the rules of the shastrū. At one place, a Hindoo, having prepared an image, at an expense which he could not meet, permitted it to be broken, and its head, arms, and legs to be trodden upon in the streets;—another, who had been thus disappointed, threw the image into the water;—and a third, having made an enormous image, had fastened it to a cart, but on the first motion of the vehicle, the head of the idol had fallen off, and the rest of the image was permitted to lie in the street as a dead carcase. I give these instances, to confirm what I have already said, that it is not devotion that leads the Hindoo to the temple, but a licentious appetite; and to afford another proof, that idolatry always tends to sink, but never to raise its votaries. In the account of Kalēē, (vol. i. p. 153,) the reader will find a fact respecting the execution of two Hindoos, who, when under sentence of death, became Roman Catholics, in pure revenge upon Kalēē; who did not, as she was believed to have done in many other cases, protect them in the act of robbery. One of the pūndits who assisted me in this work begged, if I mentioned this fact, that I would assure the English reader, that although this goddess assisted public robbers, she always informed them that they must suffer hereafter for their crimes, though she did assist them in their perpetration.

The Reverend Mr. Maurice seems astonished that a people so mild, so benevolent, so benignant as the Hindoos, ‘who (quoting Mr. Orme) *shudder at the very sight of blood,*’ should have adopted so many bloody rites. But are these Hindoos indeed so humane?—these men, and women too, who drag their dying relations to the banks of the river at all seasons, day and night, and expose them to the heat and cold in the last agonies of

death, without remorse;—who assist men to commit self-murder, encouraging them to swing with hooks in their backs, to pierce their tongues and sides, to cast themselves on naked knives, to bury themselves alive^b, throw themselves into rivers^c, from precipices^d, and under the cars of their idols;—who murder their own children, by burying them alive, throwing them to the alligators, or hanging them up alive in trees for the ants and crows before their own doors^e, or by sacrificing them to the Ganges;—who burn alive, amidst savage shouts, the heart-broken widow, by the hands of her own son, and with the corpse of a deceased father^f;—who every year butcher thousands of

^b ‘Instances are not unfrequent, where persons afflicted with loathsome and incurable diseases, have caused themselves to be buried alive.’ *Asiatic Researches*, vol. vii. p. 257.

^c Mr. W. Carey, of Cutwa, in a letter to the author, dated the 4th of November, 1814, says, ‘Two or three days ago I witnessed a scene more shocking than any I ever saw in this place:—A poor weaver was brought here, and cast into the water, with a pan of water tied round his waist to make him sink; but providentially the river was shallow, and he was taken out, after being in the water a day and a night. Hearing of the circumstance, I went to see him, and found the poor man only affected with rheumatic pains. I had him brought to my house, but could not prevail on the unfeeling natives to carry him up till I procured an order from an officer of the police. I hope he will be restored to health in a fortnight, when he will return home, with some knowledge of the gospel. What adds to the horror of this narration, is, that the perpetrators of this intended murder were the mother and brother of this unfortunate Hindoo.’

^d ‘A very singular practice prevails among the lowest tribes of the inhabitants of Berar and Gondwānū. Suicide is not unfrequently vowed by such persons in return for boons solicited from idols; and to fulfil his vow, the successful votary throws himself from a precipice named Kalū-Bhoirūvū, situated in the mountains between the Taptee and Nūrmūda rivers. The annual fair, held near that spot at the beginning of spring, usually witnesses eight or ten victims of this superstition.’ *Asiatic Researches*, vol. vii. p. 257.

^e I fancy this is done when the child is born with bad omens, or is supposed to be afflicted by some evil spirit.

^f At Benares and near Buxar numerous brick monuments have been

animals, at the call of superstition, covering themselves with their blood, consigning their carcasses to the dogs, and carrying their heads in triumph through the streets?—Are these the ‘ benignant Hindoos?’—a people who have never erected a charity-school, an alms'-house, nor an hospital; who suffer their fellow-creatures to perish for want before their very doors, refusing to administer to their wants while living, or to inter their bodies, to prevent their being devoured by vultures and jackals, when dead; who, when the power of the sword was in their hands, impaled alive, cut off the noses, the legs, and arms of culprits; and inflicted punishments exceeded only by those of the followers of the mild, amiable, and benevolent Booddhū in the Burman empire! and who very often, in their acts of pillage, murder

erected to perpetuate the memory of women who have been burnt alive with the bodies of their deceased husbands.

It is well known, that the Burmans are the followers of Booddhū, whose principal aim was to excite in mankind a horror of shedding blood, and of destroying animal life. The following facts will show how much humanity there is among a people far exceeding the Hindoos in their care not to injure whatever contains life. Mr. F. Carey thus writes to his friends in Bengal:—‘ I will now relate what has taken place in this single town of Rangoon since my residence in this country, which does not exceed four years. Some of the criminals I saw executed with my own eyes; the rest I saw immediately after execution. One man had melted lead poured down his throat, which immediately burst out from the neck, and various parts of the body. Four or five persons, after being nailed through their hands and feet to a scaffold, had first their tongues cut out, then their mouths slit open from ear to ear, then their ears cut off, and finally their bellies ripped open. Six people were crucified in the following manner: their hands and feet were nailed to a scaffold; their eyes were then extracted with a blunt hook; and in this condition they were left to expire: two died in the course of four days; the rest were liberated, but died of mortification on the sixth or seventh day. Four persons were crucified, viz. not nailed, but tied with their hands and feet stretched out at full length, in an erect posture, in which they were to remain till death; every thing they wished to eat was ordered them, with a view to prolong their lives and misery. In cases like this, the legs and feet of the criminals begin to swell and mortify at the expiration of three or four days; some are said to live in this state

the plundered, cutting off their limbs with the most cold-blooded apathy, turning the house of the murdered into a disgusting shambles!—Some of these cruelties, no doubt, arise out of the religion of the Hindoos, and are the poisoned fruits of superstition, rather than the effects of natural disposition: but this is equally true respecting the virtues which have been so lavishly bestowed on this people. At the call of the shastrü, the Hindoo gives water to the weary traveller during the month Voishakhü; but he may perish at his door without pity or relief from the first of the following month, no reward being attached to such an act after these thirty days have expired. He will make roads, pools of water, and build lodging-houses for pilgrims and travellers; but he considers himself as making a good bargain with the gods in all these transactions. It is a fact, that there is not a road in the country made by Hindoos except a few which lead to holy places; and had there been no future rewards held out for such acts of merit, even these would not have existed. Before the külee-yoogü it was lawful to sacrifice cows; but the man who does it now, is guilty of a crime as heinous as that of killing a bramhün: he may kill a buffalo, however, and Doorga will reward him with heaven for it. A Hindoo, by any direct act,

for a fortnight, and expire at last from fatigue and mortification. Those which I saw were liberated at the end of three or four days. Another man had a large bamboo run through his belly, which put an immediate end to his existence. Two persons had their bellies ripped up, just sufficient to admit of the protrusion of a small part of the intestines; and after being secured by the hands and feet at full stretch with cords, were placed in an erect posture upon bamboo rafters, and set adrift in the river, to float up and down with the tide for public view. The number of those who have been beheaded I do not exactly recollect; but they must be somewhere between twenty and thirty. One man was sawn to death, by applying the saw to the shoulder bone, and sawing right down until the bowels gushed out. One woman was beat to death with a large cudgel.—These are most of the punishments I have seen and heard of during my stay in this place; but many other instances happened during my absence, which I have not related. As for the crimes for which these punishments were inflicted, I shall only add, the crimes of some deserved death, some were of a trivial nature, and some of the victims were quite innocent.

should not destroy an insect, for he is taught that God inhabits even a fly: but it is no great crime if he should permit even his cow to perish with hunger; and he beats it without mercy, though it be an incarnation of Bhūgūvūtēē—it is enough, that he does not really deprive it of life; for the indwelling Brūmhū feels no stroke but that of death. The Hindoo will utter falsehoods that would knock down an ox, and will commit perjuries so atrocious and disgusting, as to fill with horror those who visit the courts of justice; but he will not violate his shastrū by swearing on the waters of the Ganges.

Idolatry is often also the exciting cause of the most abominable frauds. Several instances are given in this work: one will be found in vol. i. p. 122. and another respecting an image found under ground by the raja of Nūdēya, in vol. i. p. 203^h.

Indeed keeping gods is even a trade among the Hindoos: the only difficulty to be overcome, is that of exciting attention to the image. To do this, the owner of the image frequently goes from village to village, to call the attention of the neighbourhood: he also persuades some one to proclaim, that he has been warned in a dream to perform vows to this image; or he repeats to all he sees, that such and such cures have been performed by it. In the years 1807 and 1808, almost all the sick and imaginary sick Hindoos in the south of Bengal presented their offerings to an image called Tarūk-éshwūrū, at a place bearing this name. The bramhūns owning this image became rich. This excited the attention of some bramhūns near Nūdēya, who proclaimed another image of Shivū, in their possession, to be 'the brother of Tarūk-eshwūrū;' and the people of those parts flocked to this image as others had done to the original one.

The author has devoted a volume of this work to the gods.

^h Plutarch says, that Romulus, when he instituted the Ludi Consuales, to surprise the Sabine virgins, gave out, that he had discovered the altar of the god Consus hid under ground; which discovery attracted great multitudes to the sacrifice.

The next article relates to the Hindoo temples, none of which appear to be distinguished for the elegance of their architecture: they are not the work of a people sunk in barbarism; neither will they bear any comparison with the temples of the Greeks or Romansⁱ. They are not constructed so as to hold a crowd of worshippers, who are always accommodated in an area opposite the temple. The room in which the idol is placed is considered sufficiently spacious if it hold the officiating priest, the utensils for worship, and the offerings.

These temples answer none of the ends of a lecture room, nor of a Christian temple. Here the passions are never raised to heaven by sacred music, nor by the voices of a large and devout congregation celebrating the praises of the Deity in the strains of sacred poetry; here no devout feelings are awakened by the voice of prayer and confession, nor are the great truths of religion explained, or enforced upon the mind of an attentive crowd by the eloquence of a public speaker: the daily worship at the temple is performed by the solitary priest with all the dulness, carelessness, and insipidity necessarily connected with a service always the same, repeated before an idol made of a cold stone, and in which the priest has no interest whatever; and when the crowd do assemble before the temple, it is to enter upon orgies which destroy every vestige of moral feeling, and excite to every outrage upon virtue.

The dedication of a temple is a work of great ceremony^k, if

ⁱ We learn from the *Ain Akbūree*, however, that the entire revenues of Orissa, for twelve years, were expended on erecting a temple to the sun.—*Maurice's Indian Antiquities*.

^k Circumambulating a temple is an act of merit, raising the person to a place in the heaven of the god or goddess whose temple he thus walks round. At Benares the devout do it daily. If the circumambulator be a learned man, he repeats the praise of the god as he is walking, and bows to the image every time he arrives at the door of the temple. The ignorant merely walk round, and make the bow. The right hand is always kept towards the object circumambulated.

the building belong to a man of wealth; the expense incurred in presents to the bramhūns and others is also very great. The person who employs his wealth in this manner is considerably raised in the estimation of his countrymen: he frequently also endows the temple, as well as raises it; which is generally done by grants of land. The annual produce of the land thus bestowed, is expended in wages to the officiating priest, in the daily offerings to the idol, and in lighting and repairing the temple. Many temples, however, do not depend entirely on their endowments: they receive considerable sums from occasional offerings, and from what is presented at festivals¹. Some temples are supported at an expense so trifling as to astonish a reader not acquainted with the forms of idolatry: many individuals who officiate at temples obtain only the offerings, the value of which does not amount, in many instances, to more than twenty shillings a year. Some few temples are, however, splendidly endowed, and many families receive their maintenance from them. Where an idol has become very famous, and the offerings have amounted to a large sum, even kings have been anxious to lay hold of such a source of revenue.

The images of the gods may be made of almost all the metals, as well as of wood, stone, clay, &c. Most of the permanent images are made of wood or stone; those which are destroyed at the close of a festival, are made of clay. Small images of brass, silver, and gold, are not uncommon. The sculpture of the stone images resembles that of the Popish images of the 12th century; those cast in brass, &c. exhibit a similar progress of the arts. The consecration of an image is accompanied with a number of ceremonies, the most singular of which is that of conveying sight and life to the image, for which there are appropriate formulas, with prayers, inviting the deity to come and

¹ In the year 1809, at the temple of Jügūnnat'hū, near Serampore, at the car festival, about 570 roopees were presented to the idol, in vegetables, fruits, sweetmeats, garments, and money. About 150 bramhūns, 50 females, and 150 shōōdrūs, were entertained daily; and, at the close of the festival, the priests of the temple received 420 roopees.

dwell in it. After this ceremony, the image becomes sacred, and is carefully guarded from every offensive approach. The shastr̥s contain directions for making idols, and the forms of meditation used in worship contain a description of each idol: but in many instances these forms are disregarded, and the proprietor, though compelled to preserve the identity of the image, indulges his own fancy. Some images are very diminutive, especially those made of the precious metals; but others, if for temporary use, are very large: a stone image of the lingū is to be seen at Benares, which six men with joined hands can hardly grasp. At the festival of Kartikéyū, the god of war, an image is sometimes made thirty cubits high. Whatever may have been the case in other countries, idolatry in this has certainly not contributed to carry the arts of painting or sculpture to any perfection.

Any bramhūn, properly qualified by rank and knowledge, may officiate in a temple, and perform the general work of a priest. There is no order of bramhūns to whom the priesthood is confined^m: many bramhūns employ others as priests; a shōōdrū must employ a bramhūn, but he has his own choice of the individual; he cannot repeat a single formula of the védūs himself without being guilty of the highest offence. There are different offices in which priests are employed; but any bramhūn, properly qualified, may perform the ceremonies attached to them all: (see vol. ii. p. 16.) In general, a family, able to bear the expense, employs a priest on a regular allowance: some priests are retained by many families of the same cast; such a person is called the joiners' priest, or the weavers' priest, &c. The bramhūns employed as priests to the shōōdrūs are not in high estimation among their brethren, who never fail to degrade the shōōdrū

^m I insert a short extract from Bryce's 'Sketch of the State of British India,' in order to assure the author, that, as it respects Bengal, it is wholly without foundation. 'The laws have always confined a certain proportion of bramhūns to the service of the pagodas, to the education of youth, and to study.' p. 57. 'No pains are spared in rendering accomplished those females, who, as the fascinating instruments of superstition, are employed in the service of their temples.' p. 54.

in every stage and state of life. The fees of the priest are in general very small: on some occasions, at the dedication of a temple, at the ceremonies for the dead when performed for a rich man, at the great festivals, &c. the priest receives very liberal presents. Female priests are almost unknown to the Hindoos; one or two instances are recorded in vol. i. pp. 232, 235.

The ceremonies at the temples are in most cases performed daily, morning, noon, and evening, at which times food is presented to the idol: the services are short, consisting of a few forms of petition and praise; during the presentation of flowers, leaves, and (except to Shivū) a few articles of food, the priest is commonly the only person present. The doors of the lingū temples are generally open all day; multitudes of these temples are never honoured with worship, though they contain an idol: this is accounted for by there being several of these temples erected in one spot belonging to the same individual. Hindoos in general bow to the image as they pass the temple, whether the doors be open or shut. Where the deity is honoured by bloody sacrifices, a post is erected in front of the temple, for the slaughter of animals. No assemblies can be formed in these edifices; but on particular occasions the people are collected before the door, and sit or stand under an awning. The idols in honour of Vishnoo are laid down to sleep in the day, if the image be not too large;—a poor compliment to a god, that he wants rest. The utensils employed in the ceremonies at the temples are, several dishes to hold the offerings, a hand bell, a lamp, jugs for holding water, an incense dish, a copper cup to receive drink-offerings for deceased ancestors and the gods, another smaller one to pour from, a seat of kooshū grass for the priest, a large metal plate used as a bell, and a conch or shell. All these articles do not cost more than twenty shillings, unless the owner wish them to be costly.

Daily, weekly, monthly, and annual ceremonies abound among this people, to whom may truly be applied the remark of Paul

to the Athenians, (Acts xvii. 22;) the festivals are noted in the Hindoo almanacks, and are generally held at the full or total wane of the moon. In the month of February, they have one festival in honour of the goddess of learning, Sūrūswütēē, which continues one day. In March three, in honour of Shivū, Krishnū, and Gūnga. In April two; one on the anniversary of the birth of Ramū, and the other the horrid swinging festival. In June two; one in honour of Gūnga, and the other Jūgūn-nat'hū's car festival; the latter is again revived in July, when the car returns to the temple. In August the cow is worshipped, and the birth of Krishnū celebrated. In September the memory of deceased ancestors is commemorated, and the Doorga festival held. In October one, in honour of the goddess Rūtūntēē; and in November another, in honour of Kartikéyū, the god of war. On all these occasions the public offices are closed; but many other holidays are kept by the Hindoos, which are not honoured as public festivals.

The reader will find, in vol. ii. p. 27. an account of the daily duties of a bramhūn; by which it appears, that if he strictly conform to the rules of his religion, he must spend almost his whole time in religious ceremonies. The present race of bramhūns curtail these ceremonies, especially those engaged in secular affairs, who spend perhaps ten or twenty minutes in the morning, after their ablutions, in repeating the usual formulas before the lingū, or the stone called the shalūgramū, or a pan of water. Many, however, content themselves with bathing, and repeating the name of their guardian deity.

The form of initiation into the service of a person's guardian deity consists in giving him the name of this deity, and exhorting him to repeat it continually. The ceremony of initiation is given in vol. ii. p. 38. From this time, the initiated becomes entitled to all the privileges of the Hindoo religion, is placed under the protection of the gods, and receives the benediction of his spiritual guide. The Hindoos are careful to conceal the words

of initiation, and do not wish to declare to strangers what god they have chosen for their guardian deity.

The spiritual guide, who is chosen by the person himself, receives the highest reverence from the disciple, and is sometimes worshipped by him as a god. Disobedience to this guide is one of the highest offences a Hindoo can commit, and his anger is dreaded more than that of the gods. When the disciple approaches him, he prostrates himself at his feet, and the priest places his foot on his head. To such a state of degradation does the Hindoo superstition reduce the people! These priests are notorious for covetousness and impurity: some of them plunder the disciples of their all, and others violate the chastity of their wives. They are not distinguished by any particular dress, nor do they perform any offices of worship for their disciples.

Bathing in the Ganges, or in some other sacred river, or pool, is one of the most constant and necessary duties enjoined upon the Hindoos: the bramhũns, after bathing, frequently complete their devotions on the banks of the river; others go home, and repeat the requisite forms before the shalũgramũ, or a pan of water. The people are taught that bathing is a religious ceremony, by which they become purified from sinⁿ! They are never directed to bathe to promote bodily health. In the act of bathing, they pour out drink-offerings to deceased ancestors.—

ⁿ And yet so far are the Hindoos from having any moral feelings, even in their acts of *purification*, that few men bathe in a retired situation: the majority choose those places to which the female bathers resort, and on their account remain in the water long beyond the time necessary for their ablutions. Many an infamous assignment is made by looks, &c. while they are thus washing away their sins. A number of bramhũns engage as cooks to opulent families, to facilitate their licentious intrigues: this is become so common, that the bramhũns, proverbially known by the name of cooking bramhũns, are treated with the greatest suspicion by those who care for the chastity of their wives. *Multitudes of bramhũns likewise are employed as priests to prostitutes*, and actually perform the offices of religion in houses of ill-fame;—so completely absent is the moral principle from the religion of the Hindoos!

To be convinced how entirely the present race of Hindoos are influenced by the promises of salvation held out in their sacred books on this subject, it is only necessary for a person to attend to what is passing around him, viz. to the crowds bathing at the landing-places of the Ganges; to the persons bearing the sacred water into distant countries, in vessels suspended from their shoulders; to the shraddhüs and other religious ceremonies performed on its banks; to the number of temples on both sides of the river; to so great a part of the Bengal population having erected their habitations near the river; to the number of brick landing-places, built as acts of holiness, to assist the people in obtaining the favour of Gūnga; to the houses erected for the sick by the sides of the river; to the people bringing their sick relations, and laying them on bedsteads, or on the ground, by the side of the Ganges, waiting to burn them there, and to throw their ashes into the river; to the immense crowds on the banks, waiting for a junction of the planets, at which moment they plunge into the stream with the greatest eagerness; to the people committing the images of their gods to the sacred stream, at the close of their festivals; and, finally, to the boats crowded with passengers going to Sagür island (Gūnga-sagürü) every year^o.

The forms of worship (pōōja^p) before the idol are particularly

^o Till lately, people used to throw themselves, or their children, to the alligators at this place, under the idea that dying at Gūnga-sagürü, in the jaws of an alligator, was the happiest of deaths. This is now prevented by a guard of sepoy's sent by government.

^p The Ain Akbūree says, the Hindoos 'divide pōōja into sixteen ceremonies. After the devotee has performed his usual and indispensable ablutions, with the sūndhya and homü, he sits down, looking towards the east or the north, with his legs drawn up in front. Then, taking in his hand a little water and rice, he sprinkles the idol, and conceives this act to be a proper preface to the commencement of his adoration. Next follows the worship of the idol's flagon. Then succeeds the worship of the conch-shell. Last in order, a ceremony which consists in plastering the bell with ashes of sandal-wood. When he has finished, he throws down a little rice, and wishes that his god may be manifested. These various

laid down in vol. ii. p. 64. The priest who officiates has the common dress of a bramhūn; it must, however, be clean: he has occasionally one or two bramhūns to assist him in presenting the offerings.

duties are all comprised in the first of the sixteen ceremonies.—In the second, he prepares and places a table of metal, either gold, silver, or copper, as a seat or throne for a deity.—In the third, he throws water into a vessel to wash his feet; for in Hindoost'hanū it is the custom, that, when a superior enters the house of an inferior, he washes his feet.—In the fourth, he sprinkles water thrice, to represent the idol rincing his mouth, since it is also the custom for an inferior to bring to a superior water to rince his mouth with before meals.—In the fifth, sandal, flowers, betel, and rice are offered to the idol.—In the sixth, the idol and his throne are carried to another spot: then the worshipper takes in his right hand a white conch-shell full of water, which he throws over the idol, and with his left hand rings the bell.—In the seventh, he wipes the idol dry with a cloth, replaces it upon its throne, and adorns it with vestments of silk or gold stuff.—In the eighth, he puts the zennar upon the idol.—In the ninth, he makes the tilūk upon the idol in twelve places.—In the tenth, he throws over the idol flowers or green leaves.—In the eleventh, he fumigates it with perfumes.—In the twelfth, he lights a lamp with ghē.—In the thirteenth, he places before the idol trays of food, according to his ability; which are distributed among the by-standers, as the holy relics of the idol's banquet.—In the fourteenth, he stretches himself at full length with his face towards the ground, and disposes his body in such a manner, as that his eight members touch the ground, namely, the two knees, two hands, forehead, nose, and cheeks. These kinds of prostration are also performed to great men in Hindoost'hanū.—In the fifteenth, he makes a circuit around the idol several times.—In the sixteenth, he stands in the posture of a slave, with his hands uplifted, and asks permission to depart.—At some of the great festivals, boys in play make an image, paint it, and beg from house to house for the offerings, as rice, fruits, &c. When all things are ready, some one becomes the priest, and performs the ceremonies. Thus early are the Hindoo children initiated into their idolatrous rites. If, however, the parents of these children discover what is going on, they forbid it, and warn the children, that the god will be displeased. If it be an image of Kalēē, or any ferocious deity, they endeavour to terrify the children, by telling them that the goddess is a fury, and will certainly devour them. If any elderly boy be concerned, and the image made be a good one, the parents will sometimes, rather than destroy it, call a bramhūn, and have the ceremonies performed in a regular way.

Short forms of praise and prayer to the gods^a are continually used, and are supposed to promote very highly a person's spiritual interests. The following is an example of praise addressed to Gūnga:—‘ O goddess, the owl that lodges in the hollow of a tree on thy banks, is exalted beyond measure; while the emperor, whose palace is far from thee, though he may possess a million of stately elephants, and may have the wives of a million of conquered enemies to serve him, is nothing.’ Example of prayer:—‘ O god! I am the greatest sinner in the world; but thou, among the gods, art the greatest saviour: I leave my cause in thy hands.’ Praise is considered as more prevalent with the gods than prayer, as the gods are mightily pleased with flattery. Some unite vows to their supplications, and promise to present to the god a handsome offering if he be propitious.

Another act of Hindoo devotion is meditation on the form of an idol. Mr. Hastings, in his prefatory letter to the Gēeta, says, the Rev. Mr. Maurice describes the bramhūns as devoting a cer-

^a Instead of hymns in honour of the gods, the Hindoos, at present, as has been already noticed, introduce before the idol little beside filthy songs. Some bramhūns acknowledge, that not a single Hindoo seeks in his religion any thing of a moral nature. A real Christian, when he approaches God, prays, ‘ Create in me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me.’ ‘ Lead me not into temptation, but deliver me from evil.’ ‘ Give me neither poverty nor riches.’ ‘ Guide me with thy counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory.’ A Hindoo, when he supplicates his god, prays for riches, or for recovery from sickness, or for a son, or for revenge upon his enemy. Sometimes the worshipper places himself before the image in a sitting posture, and, closing his eyes, prays, ‘ Oh, god! give me beauty, let me be praised, give me prosperity, give me a son, give me riches, give me long life, or, give me health, &c.’ The eldest female of the house, throwing her garment over her shoulder, and sitting on her hams, joining her hands, in the same manner, prays, ‘ O god! preserve these my children, and my son's wife; do not suffer us to have sorrow again in our family, (referring to some death in the preceding year,) and then I will present offerings to thee every year.’ saying this, she prostrates herself before the image. Sometimes a woman, after bathing, stretches her arms towards the sun, and says, ‘ O god of day! such a one has ill-treated me; do thou afflict her. See! I supplicate thee

tain period of time to the contemplation of the deity, his attributes, and the moral duties of life. The truth is, that in this Hindoo act of devotion there is not a vestige of reference to the divine attributes, nor to moral duty. The Hindoo rehearses in his mind the form of the god, his colour, the number of his heads, eyes, hands, &c. and nothing more.

Repeating the names of the gods, particularly of a person's guardian deity, is one of the most common, and is considered as one of the most efficacious acts of devotion prescribed in the shastrūs. The oftener the name is repeated, the greater the merit. Persons may be seen in the streets repeating these names either alone, or at work, or to a parrot; others, as they walk along, count the repetitions by the beads of their necklace, which they then hold in the hand.

A great number of prescribed ceremonies, called vrütüs, exist among the Hindoos, which are practised with the hope of obtaining some blessing: females chiefly attend to these ceremonies.

Fasting is another act of religious merit among the Hindoos. Some fasts are extremely severe, and a Hindoo who is very religious must often abstain from food. It is commended, not as an act of preparation for some duty, calling for great attention of mind, but as an instance of self-denial in honour of the gods, which is very pleasing to them. One man may fast for another, and the merit of the action is then transferred to the person paying and employing another in this work.

Gifts to bramhüns are highly meritorious, as might be expected in a system exclusively formed for their exaltation: the more costly the gift, the more valuable the promissory note,

without having touched or tasted food.' A poor man, in the presence of an image, sometimes prays, 'O god! fill me every day with food. I ask no more.'

drawn on heaven, and presented to the giver. Giving entertainments to bramhūns is also another action which procures heaven.

Hospitality to travellers is placed among the duties of the Hindoos, and is practised to a considerable extent, though the distinctions of cast destroy the feelings which should give efficacy to this excellent law. So completely do these distinctions destroy every generous and benevolent feeling, that many unfortunate creatures perish in the sight of those who are well able to relieve them, but who exonerate themselves from this duty, by urging, that they are of another cast: a bramhūn finds friends every where, but the cast has sunk the afflicted shōōdrū to the level of the beasts: when a bramhūn is relieved, however, he is not indebted to the benevolence of his countrymen, so much as to the dread which they feel lest neglect of a bramhūn should bring upon them the wrath of the gods.

Digging pools, planting trees for fruit or shade, making roads for pilgrims, &c. are other duties commanded by the shastrū, and practised by the modern Hindoos.

Reading and rehearsing the pooranūs are prescribed to the Hindoos as religious duties, and many attend to them at times in a very expensive manner.

Other ceremonies contrary to every principle of benevolence exist among this people, one of which is to repeat certain formulas, for the sake of injuring, removing, or destroying enemies. Here superstition is made an auxiliary to the most diabolical passions.

But what shall we say of the murder of widows on the funeral pile?—this too is an act of great piety. The priest assists the poor wretch, in her last moments, before she falls on the pile, with the formulas given by the Hindoo legislators; and, to complete this most horrible of all religious customs, the son of this wretched victim kindles the fire in the very face of the mother

who gave him birth. Can there possibly be a greater outrage on human nature? Is there any thing like it in all the records of the most wild and savage nations? The North American Indian proceeds with the utmost coolness, it is true, in the work of scalping and murder, but the victim is his enemy, taken in battle; here the victim is an innocent woman—a mother—a widow, her heart fresh bleeding under the loss of the companion of her youth—the murderer, her own child—dragged to the work by the *mild* bramhūn, who dances, and shouts, and drowns the cries of the family and the victim in the horrid sounds of the drum. Such is the balm which is here poured into the broken heart of the widow. Nor are these unheard of, unparalleled murders, perpetrated in the night, in some impenetrable forest; but in the presence of the whole population of India, in open day:—and oh! horrible, most horrible! not less than *five thousand* of these unfortunate women, it is supposed, are immolated every twelve months. I have heard that the son sometimes manifests a great reluctance to the deed^r, and that some of these human sacrifices are almost dead before they are touched by the flames^s. It is certain, that in many cases the family do much to prevent the female from being thus drawn into the flaming gulph; but such are the effects of superstition, and the influence of long-established customs, joined to the disgrace and terrors of a state of widowhood, that, in the first moments of grief and distraction for the loss of her husband, reason is overpowered, and the widow perishes on the funeral pile, the victim of grief, superstition, and dread. Many widows are buried alive with the corpses of their husbands^t.

^r The shastrū prescribes, that he should do it with his head turned from the pile. Kennett, describing the Roman funeral, says, 'The next of blood performed the ceremony of lighting the pile, which they did with a torch, turning their face all the while the other way, as if it was done out of necessity and not willingly.'

^s These barbarous murderers say, that when a woman is thus frightened to death, the gods, charmed with her devotion, have taken her before she entered upon this holy act.

^t The following circumstance took place at Gondūl-para, about 20

Voluntary suicide is not only practised to a dreadful extent among the Hindoos, but the shastrũs positively recommend the

miles N. of Calcutta, on the 18th of March, 1813, and was communicated to the author by Capt. Kemp, an eye-witness. The description is nearly in his own words :—‘ On Thursday last, at nine in the morning, Vishwũnatũhũ, one of our best workmen, who had been sick but a short time, was brought down to the river side to expire : he was placed, as is customary, on the bank, and a consultation held respecting the time he would die ; the astrologer predicted, that his dissolution was near at hand. The sick man was then immersed up to the middle in the river, and there kept for some time ; but death not being so near as was predicted, he was again placed on the beach, extended at full length, and exposed to a hot sun, where he continued the whole of the day, excepting at those intervals when it was supposed he was dying, when he was again immersed in the sacred stream. I visited him in the evening ; he was sensible, but had not the power of utterance ; he however was able to make signs with his hand, that he did not wish to drink the river water, which they kept almost continually pouring into his mouth by means of a small shell. He remained in this situation during the night : in the morning the immersions commenced, and were continued at intervals till about five in the evening, when he expired, or was literally murdered. His wife, a young woman about sixteen years of age, hearing of his death, came to the desperate resolution of being buried alive with the corpse. She was accompanied by her friends down to the beach where the body lay, where a small branch of the Mango tree was presented to her, which (as I understood) was setting a seal to her determination ; from which, after having accepted the branch, she could not retreat. I went to her, and questioned her with respect to the horrid act she was about to perform, whether it was voluntary or from persuasion : nothing of the latter appeared ; it was entirely her own desire. I spoke to her relations on the heinousness of the crime they were guilty of, in allowing the young creature thus to precipitate herself into the presence of her Creator uncalled for. Mrs. K. spoke both to the mother and the daughter a good deal, but all to no purpose. The mother declared, that it was her daughter’s choice, who added, that she was determined to “ go the road her husband had gone.” There was not the least appearance of regret observable in the mother’s countenance, or conduct. A woman, then, can “ forget her sucking child, and forsake the child of her womb :” the prophet seemed to think it only possible that there might exist such a monster, but here it was realized ; here was a monster of a mother, that could resign her child, the gift of a gracious Providence, and designed to be the comfort

crime, and promise heaven to the self-murderer, provided he die in the Ganges! Nay, the bramhūns, as well as persons of other casts, assist those who design thus to end life, of which the reader will find instances recorded in vol. ii. pp. 113, 114, 117. In some places of the Ganges, deemed peculiarly sacred and efficacious, infatuated devotees very frequently drown themselves. A respectable bramhūn assured the author, that in a stay of only two months at Allahabad, he saw about *thirty* persons drown themselves! Lepers are sometimes burnt alive with

and support of her old age;—could, without the least apparent emotion, consign this child alive to the tomb, and herself continue an unmoved spectator of the horrid deed. At eight P. M. the corpse, accompanied by this self-devoted victim, was conveyed to a place a little below our grounds, where I repaired, to behold the perpetration of a crime which I could scarcely believe possible to be committed by any human being. The corpse was laid on the earth by the river till a circular grave of about fifteen feet in circumference and five or six feet deep was prepared; and was then (after some formulas had been read) placed at the bottom of the grave in a sitting posture, with the face to the N. the nearest relation applying a lighted wisp of straw to the top of the head. The young widow now came forward, and having circumambulated the grave seven times, calling out Hūree Būl! Hūree Būl! in which she was joined by the surrounding crowd, descended into it. I then approached within a foot of the grave, to observe if any reluctance appeared in her countenance, or sorrow in that of her relations: in hers no alteration was perceptible; in theirs, there was the appearance of exultation. She placed herself in a sitting posture, with her face to the back of her husband, embracing the corpse with her left arm, and reclining her head on his shoulders; the other hand she placed over her own head, with her forefinger erect, which she moved in a circular direction. The earth was then deliberately put round them, two men being in the grave for the purpose of stamping it round the living and the dead, which they did as a gardener does around a plant newly transplanted, till the earth rose to a level with the surface, or two or three feet above the heads of the entombed. As her head was covered some time before the finger of her right hand, I had an opportunity of observing whether any regret was manifested; but the finger moved round in the same manner as at first, till the earth closed the scene. Not a parting tear was observed to be shed by any of her relations, till the crowd began to disperse, when the usual lamentations and howling commenced, without sorrow.

their own consent, to purify themselves from disease in the next birth. Others throw themselves under the wheels of Jügünna't'hü's ponderous car, and perish instantly. Thousands perish annually by disease and want on idolatrous pilgrimages; and notwithstanding the benevolent efforts of Mr. Duncan, it is pretty certain, that infanticide is still practised to a great extent in various parts of Hindoost'hanü, (see vol. ii. p. 123.) I have, in vol. ii. p. 127, ventured to offer a calculation respecting the probable number of persons who perish annually, the victims of the bramhincal superstition, and find, that it cannot be less than *Ten Thousand Five Hundred*.

Another very popular act of Hindoo devotion is that of visiting sacred places^a. There are few Hindoos grown up to mature age, who have not visited one or more of these places, the resort of pilgrims; many spend their whole lives in passing repeatedly from one end of Hindoost'hanü to the other as pilgrims: nor are these pilgrimages confined to the lower orders, householders and learned bramhüns are equally infatuated, and think it necessary to visit one or more of these spots for the purification of the soul before death. In some instances, a river; in others, a phenomenon in nature; and in others a famous idol, attracts the Hindoos. Large sums are expended by the rich, and by the poor their little all, in these journies, in

^a A journey to Benares, &c. and the performance of religious ceremonies there, are actions in the highest repute for religious merit amongst the Hindoos. Many sirkars in Calcutta indulge the hope, that they shall remove all the sins they commit in the service of Europeans (which every one knows are neither few nor small) by a journey to Benares, before they die. The Hindoo pündits declare, that even Europeans, dying at Benares, though they may have lived all their days upon cow's flesh, will certainly obtain absorption into Brümhü. On this subject, they quote a couplet, in which Benares is compared to a loose female, who receives all, and destroys their desire of sin, by quenching their appetites. The Hindoo learned men also admit, that Englishmen may partake of the blessings of their religion in two other instances, viz. if they become firm believers in Gunga, or die at Jügünna't'hü-kshétrü. In all other respects, the Hindoo heavens are all shut against eaters of cow's flesh.

the fees to the bramhūns, and in expenses at the sacred place. I have given an account of the ceremonies preparatory to the pilgrimage, as well as of those which are performed when the pilgrims arrive at the consecrated place; to which are also added particulars of the most frequented of these haunts of superstition.

For the expiation of sin, many different methods of atonement are prescribed in the Hindoo writings; many of which, however, have fallen into disuse.

Lest the observance of all these acts of religious homage should fail to secure happiness in a future state, the Hindoos are taught to repeat the names of the gods in their last hours; and are also enjoined to make presents to the bramhūns, especially to their spiritual guides: their relations also immerse the body of a diseased person up to the middle in the Ganges, and pour copiously of this sacred water into the dying man.

To procure relief for the wandering spirit after death, they make to it offerings of rice, &c. in a religious ceremony, almost universally attended to, called the shraddhū, and on which very frequently a rich man expends not less than 3 or 400,000 rupees. To make this offering at Gūya, is supposed to be attended with the certain deliverance of the deceased from all sorrow*.

The pooranūs teach, that after death the soul becomes united to an aërial body, and passes to the seat of judgment, where it is

* 'Ah!' said a Hindoo one day, in the hearing of the author, lamenting the catastrophe, 'it is not every one, even of those who set out for Gūya, who reaches the place.' Another Hindoo, in the presence of the author, reproving a young bramhūn, who refused to afford pecuniary help to his aged infirm parent, asked him, if this was not the grand reason why a person entered into the marriage state, that he might have a son, who, by offerings at Gūya, might procure for him happiness after death?

tried by Yümü, the Indian Pluto, who decides upon its future destiny. It, however, remains in this ærial vehicle, till the last shraddhū is performed, twelve months after death; when it passes into happiness or misery, according to the sentence of Yümü.

The same works teach, that there are many places of happiness for the devout, as well as of misery for the wicked; that God begins to reward in this life those who have performed works of merit, and punishes the wicked here by various afflictions; that indeed all present events, prosperous or adverse, are the rewards or punishments inevitably connected with merit or demerit, either in a preceding birth, or in the present life; that where merit preponderates, the person, after expiating sin by death and by sufferings in hell, rises to a higher birth, or ascends to the heaven of his guardian deity.

The joys of the Hindoo heavens are represented as wholly sensual, and the miseries of the wicked as consisting in corporal punishment: the descriptions of the former disgust a chaste mind by their grossness, and those given of the latter offend the feelings by their brutal literality.

Anxious to obtain the CONFESSIO^N OF FAITH of a BRAMHUN, from his own pen, I solicited this of a man of superior understanding, and I here give a translation of this article:—

‘ God is invisible, independent, ever-living, glorious, uncorrupt, all-wise, the ever-blessed, the almighty; his perfections are indescribable, and past finding out; he rules over all, supports all, destroys all, and remains after the destruction of all; there is none like him; he is silence; he is free from passion, from birth, &c. from increase and decrease, from fatigue, the need of refreshment, &c. He possesses the power of infinite diminution, and lightness, and is the soul of all.

‘ He created, and then entered into, all things, in which he

exists in two ways, untouched by matter, and receiving the fruits of practice^y. He now assumes visible forms, for the sake of engaging the minds of mankind. The different gods are parts of God, though his essence remains undiminished, as rays of light leave the sun his undiminished splendour. He created the gods to perform those things in the government of the world of which man was incapable. Some gods are parts of other gods, and there are deities of still inferior powers. If it be asked, why God himself does not govern the world, the answer is, that it might subject him to exposure, and he chooses to be concealed: he therefore governs by the gods, who are emanations from the one God, possessing a portion of his power: he who worships the gods as the one God, substantially worships God. The gods are helpful to men in all human affairs, but they are not friendly to those who seek final absorption; being jealous lest, instead of attaining absorption, they should become gods, and rival them.

‘ Religious ceremonies procure a fund of merit to the performer, which raises him in every future birth, and at length advances him to heaven, (where he enjoys happiness for a limited period,) or carries him towards final absorption.

‘ Happiness in actual enjoyment is the fruit of the meritorious works of preceding births; but very splendid acts of merit procure exaltation even in the birth in which they are performed. So, the misery which a person is now enduring, is the fruit of crimes in a former birth: enormous crimes however meet with punishment in the life in which they are committed. The miseries of a future state arise out of sins unremoved by former sufferings: an inanimate state, and that of reptiles, are also called

^y Here an objection presses hard on the bramhūn, that it is God, or Spirit, then, in matter, that suffers, since matter cannot suffer. To this he answers, that the heart, though it be inanimate, and, in consequence, unconscious matter, by its nearness to spirit, becomes capable of joy and sorrow, and that this is the sufferer.

states of suffering. Absorption can be obtained only by qualifications acquired on earth; and to obtain this, even an inhabitant of heaven must be born on earth. A person may sink to earth again by crimes committed in heaven. The joys of heaven arise only from the gratification of the senses. A person raised to heaven is considered as a god.

‘ Every ceremony of the Hindoo religion is either accompanied by a general prayer for some good, or is done from pure devotion, without hope of reward; or from a principle of obedience to the shastrü, which has promised certain blessings on the performance of such and such religious actions.

‘ Various sacrifices are commanded, but the most common one at present is the burnt-offering with clarified butter, &c. It is performed to procure heaven.—The worship of the gods is, speaking generally, followed by benefits in a future state, as the prayers, praise, and offerings, please the gods.—Repeating the names of the gods procures heaven, for the name of god is like fire, which devours every combustible.—Bathing is the means of purification before religious services, and when attended to in sacred places, merits heaven.—Gifts to the poor, and to persons of merit, and losing life to save another, are actions highly meritorious, and procure for the person future happiness.—Fasting is an act of merit, as the person refuses food in devotion to the gods.—Vows to the gods procure heaven.—Praise offered to the gods in songs, is efficacious in procuring future happiness.—Visiting holy places, a spiritual guide, a father or a mother, destroys all sin.—Compassion, forbearance, tenderness, (regarding the shedding of blood,) speaking truth, entertaining strangers, becoming the refuge of the oppressed, planting trees, cutting pools of water, making flights of steps to holy rivers, and roads to holy places, giving water to the thirsty, building temples and lodging-houses for travellers, hearing the praise of the gods or a sacred book, &c. are actions which merit heaven.—Religious austerities are useful to subdue the passions, and raise the mind to a pure state. These austerities are rewarded either by heaven or absorption.’

Thus far this bramhinal Confession of Faith. Its author has scarcely noticed the amazing efficacy ascribed to religious abstraction, and the austerities practiced by anchorites, though the doctrine of the védüs evidently favours an ascetic life. Indeed, retirement from the world and abstraction of mind, assisted by bodily austerities, is considered as the direct way to final beatitude; yet it is not denied, but that a person who continues in a secular state, may, by performing the duties of his religion, accelerate his approach, either in this or some future birth, to divine destiny. The yogēē being thus exalted in the Hindoo system of theology, and in consequence honoured by his countrymen, it has become very common to embrace the life of a religious mendicant; to do which, indeed, among an idle, effeminate, and dissolute people, there are many inducements very different from those of a religious nature: disappointments in life, disagreeable domestic occurrences, wandering propensities, illicit connections, and very often a wish to procure impunity in the commission of flagrant crimes², induce many to embrace such a life. Perhaps there is not a single instance at present known, of a person's becoming an ascetic from the pure desire of absorption. In cases where there is the greatest appearance of such a desire, the hermit possesses a motive no higher than that of exemption from the troubles of mortal existence. I have given in this work an account of nearly twenty orders of mendicants, (vol. ii. p. 190, &c.) the followers of different deities: these are the scourge of the country, though the legitimate offspring of this baneful superstition. Nor need we now expect to see realized the description of a yogēē as laid down in the shastrü: this description never was realized; those who have received the highest fame as yogēēs, were as corrupt, perhaps, as the present wretched imitators of these austerities. Many actions are attributed to them which put human nature to the blush.

² I have noticed in vol. ii. p. 189 the fact, that many hordes of mendicants are armed, and live by public plunder; but perhaps there are quite as many secret robbers to be found in the garb of religious mendicants. Since this fact has become more generally known, many have suffered the punishment of their crimes.

The sum of the Hindoo doctrine, then, is this :—spirit dwelling in bodies, and partaking of the passions incident to residence in matter, is purified by austerities and numerous transmigrations, and at length re-obtains absorption into the divine nature. Religious practice leads to better destiny, and divine destiny draws the person to abstraction and religious austerities.

Such is the Hindoo religion ; let us examine how far it is practised at present. The ceremonies most popular are—the daily ablutions, repeating the names of the gods, the daily worship of some idol, and visiting holy places. The works of merit in greatest estimation are, entertaining bramhūns, building temples, cutting pools, erecting landing-places to the Ganges, and expensive offerings to deceased ancestors.

The strict bramhūns are distinguished by a scrupulous regard to bathing, the daily worship of their guardian deity, and a proud contempt of the lower orders. The voishnūvūs are more sociable, and converse much among each other on their favourite Krishnū, and the accidents connected with religious pilgrimages.

‘At present,’ says the bramhūn whose confession of faith has been given in the preceding pages, ‘*nine parts in ten of the whole Hindoo population have abandoned all conscientious regard to the forms of their religion.* They rise in the morning without repeating the name of god, and perform no religious ceremony whatever till the time of bathing at noon, when, for fear of being reproached by their neighbours, they go and bathe : a few labour through the usual ceremonies, which occupy about fifteen minutes ; the rest either merely bathe, or hypocritically make a few of the signs used in worship, and then return home, and eat. This constitutes the whole of their daily practice. Among these nine parts, moreover, there are many who spend the time of bathing in conversation with others, or in gazing at the women ; and some are to be found who ridicule those who employ a greater portion of time in religious ceremonies : “What ! you have taken an ass’s load of religion.” “Faith ! you are become

very religious—a very holy man. Rise, and go to your proper work.” Three-fourths of the single tenth part attend to the daily duties of their religion in the following manner:—when they rise, they repeat the name of their guardian deity, make a reverential motion with the head and hands in remembrance of their absent spiritual guide, then wash themselves in the house, and pursue their business till noon. Should the wife or child have neglected to prepare the flowers, &c. for worship, the master of the family scolds his wife in some such words as these:—“Why do I labour to maintain you? It is not because you can answer for me, or preserve me from punishment at death; but that you may assist me in these things, that I may repeat the name of God, and prepare for a future state.” If the son is to be reprov'd for such a neglect, the father asks him, if he is not ashamed to spend so much time in play, careless how much fatigue he undergoes to please himself, while he is unwilling to do the smallest trifle to please the gods. He declares himself ashamed of such a family, and desires to see their faces no more. He then gathers the flowers himself, and going to the river side, takes some clay, examines whether it be free from every impurity, lays it down, taking a morsel with him into the water, immerses himself once, and then rubs himself with the clay, repeating this prayer, “O earth! thou bearest the weight of the sins of all: take my sins upon thee, and grant me deliverance.” He then invites to him the river goddesses Yūmoona, Godavūrēē, Sūrūs-wütēē, Nūrmūda, Sindhoo, and Kavērēē, that he may, in Gūnga, have the merit of bathing in them all at once, and again immerses himself, after repeating, “On such a day of the month, on such a day of the moon, &c. I (such a one) bathe in the southwards-flowing Gūnga.” He then offers up a prayer for himself in some such words as these;—“Ubbūyū-chūrūnū, praying for final happiness for ten millions of his family, bathes in Gūnga:” and then immerses again. Next, he repeats the day of the month, of the moon, &c. and immerses himself, while he utters, “Let my guardian deity be propitious;” and then ascends the bank, wiping his hair, and repeating the praises of Gūnga, as, “O Gūnga, thou art the door of heaven, thou art the watery image of religion, thou art the

garland round the head of Shivü : the very craw-fish in thee are happy, while a king at a distance from thee is miserable." He then sits down, and repeats certain prayers to the sun for the removal of his sins, among which is the celebrated gayütrêê, "*Let us meditate on the adorable light of the divine Ruler, (Savitrêê :) may it guide our intellects.*" He next pours out drink-offerings to Yümü, to Brümha, Vishnoo, Roodrü, the eight progenitors of mankind, to all the gods, and all living things in the three worlds, to certain sages, and at length to his forefathers, praying that they may hereby be satisfied. Now he forms, with the clay he had prepared, an image of the lingü, and worships it; which act includes praise to one of the gods, prayers for preservation, meditation on the form of the idol, hymns on the virtues of some deity, and repetitions of the names of the gods. He then returns home, and repeats, if he has leisure, certain portions of one of the shastrüs. Before he begins to eat, he offers up his food to his guardian deity, saying, "I offer this food to such a god;" and after sitting, with his eyes closed, as long as would be requisite to milk a cow, he takes the food and eats it. In the evening, just before sun-set, if he have a temple belonging to him, he presents some fruits, &c. to the image, repeats parts of the ceremonies of the forenoon, and the name of some deity at considerable length. When he retires to rest, he repeats the word Püdmü-nabhü, a name of Vishnoo. Perhaps one person in ten thousand carries these ceremonies a little farther than this.

As a person passes along the streets and roads he is continually reminded of one or other of these ceremonies :—here sits a man in his shop, repeating the name of his guardian deity, or teaching it to his parrot ^b—there go half a dozen voiragêês, or other per-

^b This ceremony is supposed to bring great blessings both on the teacher and the scholar: the parrot obtains heaven, and so does its master. Numbers of Hindoos, particularly in a morning and evening, may be seen in the streets walking about with parrots in their hands, and repeating aloud to them, 'Radha-Krishnü, Radha-Krishnü, Krishnü, Krishnü, Radha, Radha,' or 'Shivü-Doorga,' or 'Kalêê-türaü.' Some are thus employed six months, others twelve or eighteen, before the parrot has

sons, making their journey to some holy place—here passes a person, carrying a basket on his head, containing rice, sweetmeats, fruits, flowers, &c. an offering to his guardian deity—here comes a man with a chaplet of red flowers round his head, and the head of a goat in his hand, having left the blood and carcase before the image of Kalēe—there sits a group of Hindoos, listening to three or four persons rehearsing and chanting poetical versions of the pooranūs—here sits a man in the front of his house reading one of the pooranūs^c, moving his body like the trunk of a tree in a high wind—and (early in the morning) here comes a group of jaded wretches, who have spent the night in boisterously singing filthy songs, and dancing in an indecent manner, before the image of Doorga—add to this, the villagers, men and women, coming dripping from the banks of the Ganges—and the reader has a tolerable view of the Hindoo idolatry, as it stalks, every day, along the streets and roads, and as it may be recognized by any careless observer.

The reader will perceive, that in all these religious ceremonies not a particle is found to interest or amend the heart; no family bible, ‘profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for instruction in righteousness, that men may be thoroughly furnished unto all good works;’ no domestic worship^d; no pious assembly where

learnt his lesson. The merit consists in having repeated the name of a god so great a number of times.

^c Reading a book, or having it read at a person’s house, even though the person himself should not understand it, is a most meritorious action. The love of learning for its own sake is unknown in Bengal: a Hindoo, if he applies to learning, always does it to obtain roopees—or heaven. When he opens one of the shastrūs, or even an account-book, he makes a bow to the book. A shopkeeper, when he is about to balance his books, uncertain how the balance will fall, makes a vōw to some god, that if by his favour he should not find himself in debt, he will present to him some offerings.

^d The women and children take no share in the worship performed by the master of the family. It is not supposed to belong to them. See vol. ii. p. 36.

the village preacher 'attempts each art, reproveth each dull delay, allures to brighter worlds, and leads the way.' No standard of morals to repress the vicious; no moral education in which the principles of virtue and religion may be implanted in the youthful mind. Here every thing that assumes the appearance of religion, ends (if you could forget its impurity) in an unmeaning ceremony, and leaves the heart cold as death to every moral principle. Hence the great bulk of the people have abandoned every form and vestige of religious ceremony. The bramhūn who communicated this information, attributed this general disregard of their religion to the kŭlee-yoogŭ; and consoled himself with the idea, that this deplorable state of things was an exact fulfilment of certain prophecies in the pooranŭs.

Some persons may plead, The doctrine of a state of future rewards and punishments has always been supposed to have a strong influence on public morals: the Hindoos not only have this doctrine in their writings, but are taught to consider every disease and misfortune of life as an undoubted symptom of moral disease, and the terrific appearances of its close-pursuing punishment—can this fail to produce a dread of vice, and a desire to merit the favour of the Deity? I will still further assist the objector, and inform him, that the Hindoo writings declare, that till every immoral taint is removed, every sin atoned for, and the mind has obtained perfect abstraction from material objects, it is impossible to be re-united to the Great Spirit; and that, to obtain this perfection, the sinner must linger in many hells, and transmigrate through almost every form of matter. Great as these terrors are, there is nothing more palpable than that, with most of the Hindoos, they do not weigh the weight of a feather, compared with the loss of a roopee. The reason is obvious: every Hindoo considers all his actions as the effect of his destiny; he laments perhaps his miserable fate, but he resigns himself to it without a struggle, like the malefactor in a condemned cell. To this may be added, what must have forced itself on the observation of every thoughtful observer, that, in the absence of the religious principle, no outward terrors,

especially those which are invisible and future, not even bodily sufferings, are sufficient to make men virtuous.—Painful experience proves, that even in a Christian country, if the religious principle does not exist, the excellency and the rewards of virtue, and the dishonour and misery attending vice, may be held up to men for ever, without making a single convert.

But let us now advert to the pernicious errors inculcated in the Hindoo writings, and to the vices and miseries engendered by the popular superstition:—

The Bhūgūvūt-Gēeta contains the following most extraordinary description of God:—‘*Sūnjūyū*. The mighty compound and divine being Hūree, having, O raja, thus spoken, made evident unto Urjoonū his supreme and heavenly form; of many a mouth and eye; many a heavenly ornament; many an up-raised weapon; adorned with celestial robes and chaplets; anointed with heavenly essence; covered with every marvellous thing; the eternal God, whose countenance is turned on every side! The glory and amazing splendour of this mighty being may be likened to the sun rising at once into the heavens, with a thousand times more than usual brightness. The son of Pandoo then beheld within the body of the god of gods, standing together, the whole universe divided into its vast variety. He was overwhelmed with wonder, and every hair was raised an end. He bowed down his head before the god, and thus addressed him with joined hands:—*Urjoonū*. I behold, O god! within thy breast, the dévūs assembled, and every specific tribe of beings. I see Brūmha, that deity sitting on his lotus-throne; all the rishees and heavenly oorūgūs: I see thyself, on all sides, of infinite shape, formed with abundant arms, and bellies, and mouths, and eyes; but I can neither discover thy beginning, thy middle, nor again thy end. O universal lord, form of the universe! I see thee with a crown, and armed with club and chūkrū, a mass of glory, darting refulgent beams around. I see thee, difficult to be seen, shining on all sides with light immeasurable, like the ardent fire, or glorious sun. I see thee of

valour infinite; the sun and moon thy eyes; thy mouth a flaming fire; and the whole world shining with reflected glory! The space between the heavens and the earth is possessed by thee alone, and every point around; the three regions of the universe, O mighty spirit! behold the wonders of thy awful countenance with troubled minds. Of the celestial bands, some I see fly to thee for refuge; whilst some, afraid, with joined hands sing forth thy praise. The mūhūrshēes, holy bands, hail thee, and glorify thy name with adoring praises. The roodrūs, the adityūs, the vūsoos, and all those beings the world esteemeth good; ūshwinū, and koomarū, the mūrroots and the ooshmūpas, the gūndhūrvūs and yūkshūs, with the holy tribes of ūsoorūs; all stand gazing on thee, and all alike amazed! The worlds, alike with me, are terrified to behold thy wondrous form gigantic; with many mouths and eyes; with many arms, and legs, and breasts; with many bellies, and with rows of dreadful teeth! Thus as I see thee, touching the heavens, and shining with such glory; of such various hues; with widely-opened mouths, and bright expanded eyes; I am disturbed within me; my resolution faileth me, O Vishnō! and I find no rest! Having beholden thy dreadful teeth, and gazed on thy countenance, emblem of time's last fire, I know not which way I turn! I find no peace! Have mercy then, O god of gods! thou mansion of the universe! The sons of Dhritūrashtrū, now, with all those rulers of the land, Bhēēshmū, Dronū, the son of Sōōtū, and even the fronts of our army, seem to be precipitating themselves hastily into thy mouths, discovering such frightful rows of teeth! whilst some appear to stick between thy teeth with their bodies sorely mangled.*—It should be observed, that this frightful description of the Hindōo Supreme Being does not relate to the ferocious Kalēē, drinking the blood of the giants; but it is the playful Krishnū who thus shews his dreadful teeth, with the mangled bodies of the family of Dhritūrashtrū sticking between them.

No question occurs so frequently in the Hindōo shastrūs as this

* Wilkins's translation of the Bhūgūvūtū-Gēēta.

—‘What is God?’ To know whether he exists or not, page upon page has been written; and this question has been agitated in every period of Hindoo history, wherever two or three pūndits happened to meet, with a solicitude, but, at the same time, with an uncertainty, which carries us at once to the apostolic declaration, ‘The world by wisdom knew not God.’ Some pūndits call him the invisible and ever-blessed; others conceive of him as possessing form: others have the idea that he exists like an inconceivably small atom; sometimes he is male; at other times female; sometimes both male and female, producing a world by conjugal union; sometimes the elements assume his place, and at other times he is a deified hero. Thus in 330,000,000 of forms, or names, this nation, in the emphatical language of St. Paul, has been, from age to age, ‘feeling after’ the Supreme Being, like men groping ‘in the region and shadow of death;’ and, after so many centuries, the question is as much undetermined as ever—What is God?

One day, in conversation with the Sūngskritū head-pūndit of the College of Fort William, on the subject of God, this man, who is truly learned in his own shastrūs, gave the author, from one of their books, the following parable:—In a certain country there existed a village of blind men, who had heard of an amazing animal called the elephant, of the shape of which, however, they could procure no idea. One day an elephant passed through the place: the villagers crowded to the spot where the animal was standing; and one of them seized his trunk, another his ear, another his tail, another one of his legs. After thus endeavouring to gratify their curiosity, they returned into the village, and sitting down together, began to communicate their ideas on the shape of the elephant to the villagers: the man who had seized his trunk said, he thought this animal must be like the body of the plantain tree; he who had touched his ear was of opinion, that he was like the winnowing fan; the man who had laid hold of his tail said, he thought he must resemble a snake; and he who had caught his leg declared, he must be like a pillar. An old blind man of some judgment was

present, who, though greatly perplexed in attempting to reconcile these jarring notions, at length said—‘ You have all been to examine this animal, and what you report, therefore, cannot be false: I suppose, then, that the part resembling the plantain tree must be his trunk; what you thought similar to a fan must be his ear; the part like a snake must be the tail; and that like a pillar must be his leg.’ In this way the old man, uniting all their conjectures, made out something of the form of the elephant.—Respecting God,’ added the pūndit, ‘ we are all blind; none of us have seen him; those who wrote the shastrūs, like the old blind man, have collected all the reasonings and conjectures of mankind together, and have endeavoured to form some idea of the nature of the divine Being^c.’ It is an irresistible argument in favour of the majesty, simplicity, and truth of the Holy Scriptures, that nothing of this uncertainty has been left on the mind of the most illiterate Christian. However mysterious the subject, we never hear such a question started in Christian countries—What is God?

The doctrine of a plurality of gods, with their consequent intrigues, criminal amours, quarrels, and stratagems to counteract each other, has produced the most fatal effects on the minds of men. Can we expect a people to be better than their gods? Brūmha was inflamed with evil desires towards his own daughter^f.—Vishnoo, when incarnate as Bamūnū, deceived king Būlee, and deprived him of his kingdom^g.—Shivū’s wife was constantly jealous on account of his amours, and charged him with associating with the women of a low cast at Cooch-Behar. The story of Shivū and Mohinēē, a female form of Vishnoo, is shockingly indelicate^h.—Vrihūspūtee, the spiritual guide of the gods, committed a rape on his eldest brother’s wifeⁱ.—Indrū was guilty of dishonouring the wife of his spiritual guide^k.—Sōōryū ravished a virgin named Koontee^l.—Yūmū, in a passion, kicked his own mother, who cursed him, and afflicted him with

^c Acts xvii. 27.^f See Kalika pooranū.^g See Mūhabharātū.^h Ibid.ⁱ Ibid.^k Ibid.^l Ibid.

a swelled leg, which to this day the worms are constantly devouring^m.—Ugnee was inflamed with evil desires towards six virgins, the daughters of as many sages; but was overawed by the presence of his wifeⁿ.—Būlūramū was a great drunkard^o.—Vayoo was cursed by Dūkshū, for making his daughters crooked when they refused his embraces. He is also charged with a scandalous connection with a female monkey^p.—When Vūroonū was walking in his own heaven, he was so smitten with the charms of Oorvūshēē, a courtesan, that, after a long contest, she was scarcely able to extricate herself from him^q.—Krishnū's thefts, wars, and adulteries are so numerous, that his whole history seems to be one uninterrupted series of crimes^r.—In the images of Kalēē, she is represented as treading on the breast of her husband^s.—Lūkshmēē and Sūrūswūtēē, the wives of Vishnoo, were continually quarrelling^t.—It is worthy of enquiry, how the world is governed by these gods more wicked than men, that we may be able to judge how far they can be the objects of faith, hope, and affection. Let us open the Hindoo sacred writings: here we see the Creator and the Preserver perpetually counteracting each other. Sometimes the Preserver is destroying, and at other times the Destroyer is preserving. On a certain occasion^u, Shivū granted to the great enemy of the gods, Ravūnū, a blessing which set all their heavens in an uproar, and drove the 330,000,000 of gods into a state of desperation. Brūmha created Koombhū-kūrnū, a monster larger than the whole island of Lūnka; but was obliged to doom him to an almost perpetual sleep, to prevent his producing an universal famine. This god is often represented as bestowing a blessing, to remove the effects of which Vishnoo is obliged to become incarnate: nay, these effects have not in some cases been removed till all the gods have been dispossessed of their thrones, and obliged to go a begging; till all human affairs have been thrown into confusion, and all the elements seized and turned against

^m See Mūhabharūtū.ⁿ Ibid.^o Ibid.^p See Ramayānū.^q Ibid.^r See the Shrēē-bhagāvūtū.^s See the Markūndēyū

pooranū.

^t See the Vrihuddhārmū pooranū.^u See the Ramayānū.

the Creator, the Preserver, and the Reproducer. When some giant, blessed by Brümha, has destroyed the creation, Vishnoo and Shivü have been applied to; but they have confessed that they could do nothing for the tottering universe.

Reverence for the gods, especially among the poor, as might be expected, does not exceed their merits; yet it is a shocking fact, that language like the following should be used respecting what the Hindoos suppose to be the Providence which governs the world:—when it thunders awfully, respectable Hindoos say, ‘Oh! the gods are giving us a bad day;’ the lower orders say, ‘The rascally gods are dying.’ During a heavy rain, a woman of respectable cast frequently says, ‘Let the gods perish! my clothes are all wet.’ A man of low cast says, ‘These rascally gods are sending more rain.’

In witnessing such a state of gross ignorance, on a subject of infinite moment to men, how forcibly do we feel the truth and the wisdom of the declaration of the Divine Author of the Christian religion, ‘This is life eternal, to know thee the only true God!’ A correct knowledge of the Divine perfections, in the mind of a sincere Christian, is a treasure which transcends in value all the riches of the earth: for instance, how much does the doctrine of the Divine Unity tend to fix the hope and joy of the Christian! but the poor Hindoo knows not, amongst so many gods, upon whom to call, or in whom to trust. In the spirituality of the Divine Nature, united to omniscience and omnipresence, the Christian finds a large field for the purest and most sublime contemplations; but the degraded idolater, walking round his pantheon, sees beings that fill him only with shame or terror: he retires from the image of Kalēe overwhelmed with horror, and from those of Radha-Krishnü with confusion and contempt—or else inflamed with concupiscence. How effectual to awaken the fears and excite the salutary apprehensions of those who neglect their best interests, is the scripture doctrine of the Divine Purity and Justice; but the wretched Hindoo has the examples of the most corrupt beings, even in his

gods, to lead him to perdition. How necessary to the happiness of a good man, are just ideas of the wisdom, and equity, and beneficence, of providential dispensations:—the reader has seen how impossible it is for a Hindoo to derive the smallest consolation in adversity from the doctrine of the shastrüs respecting the government of the world. How consoling to a person, sensible of many failings, is the doctrine of the Divine Mercy:—but these heathens have nothing held out to encourage the hopes of the penitent; nothing short of perfect abstraction, and the extinction of every desire, qualify for deliverance from matter.—The sincere Christian, with his knowledge of God, ‘casteth all his care on his Father, who is in heaven;’ and the language of his mind, invigorated by the living waters flowing from the fountain of eternal truth, is, ‘Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel;’ ‘Though I walk through the valley and even the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.’

The Hindoo writings farther teach, that it is the Great Spirit which is diffused through every form of animated matter; that actions of every kind are his; that he is the charioteer, and the body the chariot*; that it is the highest attainment of human wisdom to realize the fact, that the human soul and Brümhü are one and the same. By this doctrine all accountability is destroyed, and liability to punishment rendered preposterous. How often has the author heard it urged by the most sensible Hindoos, that the moving cause of every action, however flagitious, is God; that man is an instrument upon which God plays what tune he pleases. Another modification of this doctrine is that of fate, or unchangeable destiny, embraced, without a dissentient voice, by all the Hindoos. Thus the Deity on his throne is insulted as the author of all crimes, and men are emboldened to rush forward in the swiftest career of iniquity.

The sacred writings of the Hindoos encourage the bramhüns

* See the Védantü-sarü.

to despise the great body of the people, and teach them, that the very sight and touch of a shōōdrū renders them unclean. To be contented in ignorance is the duty of a shōōdrū, as well as to drink with reverence and hope the water in which the bramhūn has dipped his foot. The services too and the hopes held forth by this religion, are almost exclusively confined to the bramhūns. The shōōdrū is supposed to be born to evil destiny; and the only hope he can indulge in, that after a long succession of transmigrations he may probably be born a bramhūn.

The subjugation of the passions, so much insisted upon in the Hindoo shastrūs, applies to all virtuous as well as vicious desires. The person who is divested of all desire, even that of obtaining God, is described as having arrived at the summit of perfection. The love of parents, of children, &c. is an imperfection, according to the Hindoo code: hence says Krishnū, 'Wisdom is exemption from attachment and affection for children, wife, and home^v.'

These shastrūs also teach, that sin may be removed by the slightest ceremony; and thus, instead of reforming, they promise impunity in transgression. See different stories in vol. i. pp. 82, 272, 277.

The ūt'hūrvū védū contains many prayers for the destruction

At the time a learned native was assisting the Rev. Mr. Carey in the translation of the New Testament into the Sūngskritū, when such passages as these were translating, 'Henceforth know I no man after the flesh;' 'We are dead, and our life is hid,' &c. 'I am crucified to the world;' 'We are fools for Christ;' 'We are made a spectacle,' &c. he exclaimed, 'This is pure voiragēēism: Paul was a true Pūrum-hūngsēē.' Yet the divine principles upon which Paul trampled upon the world, and devoted himself supremely to God, have no existence in the shastrūs. The Hindoo principle is mere stoicism; its origin is either selfishness, or infatuated ambition: but the principle of the apostle, was the love of Christ who died on a cross for his enemies—as he himself says, 'The love of Christ, like an irresistible torrent, bears us away;' 'If we are beside ourselves, it is for your sakes.'

of enemies; and gives a list of offerings proper to be presented to Bhūgūvūtēē, that she may be induced to assist in the gratification of revengeful passions: among the rest, the worshipper is to make a paste image of a man, cut off its head, and offer this head to the goddess, with a burnt-sacrifice, &c. Is it not reasonable to suppose, that human sacrifices preceded the cutting off the head of this man of paste; and that one man was sacrificed and offered to the gods to induce them to destroy another?

In the Institutes of Mūnoo a man is allowed to commit adultery, if the female consent; to steal, for the sake of performing a religious ceremony; and to perjure himself, from benevolent motives: they also allow of lying, to preserve the life of a bramhūn, to appease an angry wife, or to please a mistress². What is still worse, in this code a bramhūn, in case of want, is permitted to steal, not from the rich merely, but—from his slave! It is a common sentiment among this people, that in secular transactions lying is absolutely necessary; and perjury is so common, that it is impossible to rely upon the testimony of Hindoo witnesses. The natives ridicule the idea of administering justice by oral testimony.

I have given in vol. ii. p. 172, a few examples of persons raised to heaven by their own works, to shew that these works have nothing to do with real morality. But how shall we describe the unutterable abominations connected with the popular

² ‘If a man, by the impulse of lust, tell lies to a woman, or if his own life would otherwise be lost, or all the goods of his house spoiled, or if it is for the benefit of a bramhūn, in such affairs falsehood is allowable.’ *Halhed’s Code of Gentoo Laws*.—How can we wonder that the Hindoos should be so addicted to falsehood, when even in the rig-védū, approached with profound reverence by so many Christian infidels, we find monstrous exaggerations like the following?—‘Bhūrūtū distributed in Mūshnarū a hundred and seven thousand millions of black elephants with white tusks, and decked with gold.’ ‘A sacred fire was lighted for Bhūrūtū, son of Dōoshūntū, in Sachigoonū, at which a thousand bramhūns shared a thousand millions of cows apiece.’ See *Mr. Colebrooke’s Essay*.

superstition? The author has witnessed scenes which can be clothed in no language, and has heard of other abominations practised in the midst of religious rites, and in the presence of the gods, which, if they could be described, would fill the whole Christian world with disgust and horror. Let impenetrable darkness cover them till 'the judgment of the great day.'

Men are sufficiently corrupt by nature, without any outward excitements to evil in the public festivals; nor have civil nor spiritual terrors, the frowns of God and governors united, been found sufficient to keep within restraint the overflowings of iniquity:—but what must be the moral state of that country, where the sacred festivals, and the very forms of religion, lead men to every species of vice! These festivals and public exhibitions excite universal attention, and absorb, for weeks together, almost the whole of the public conversation: and such is the enthusiasm with which they are hailed, that the whole country seems to be thrown into a ferment: health, property, time, business, every thing is sacrificed to them. In this manner are the people prepared to receive impressions from their national institutions. If these institutions were favourable to virtue, the effects would be most happy; but as, in addition to their fascination, they are exceedingly calculated to corrupt the mind, the most dreadful consequences follow, and vice, like a mighty torrent, flows through the plains of Bengal, with the force of the flood-tide of the Ganges, carrying along with it young and old, the learned and the ignorant, rich and poor, all casts and descriptions of people—into an awful eternity!

In short, the characters of the gods, and the licentiousness which prevails at their festivals, and abounds in their popular works, with the enervating nature of the climate, have made the Hindoos the most effeminate and corrupt people on earth. I have, in the course of this work, exhibited so many proofs of this fact, that I will not again disgust the reader by going into the subject. Suffice it to say, that fidelity to marriage vows is almost unknown

among the Hindoos ; the intercourse of the sexes approaches very near to that of the irrational animals. The husband almost invariably lives in criminal intercourse during the pupilage of his infant wife ; and she, if she becomes a widow, cannot marry, and in consequence, being destitute of a protector and of every moral principle, becomes a willing prey to the lascivious.

Add to all this, the almost incredible number of human victims which annually fall in this Aceldama. I have ventured on an estimate of the number of Hindoos who annually perish, the victims of the bramhinal religion ; (vol. ii. p. 127,) and have supposed, that they cannot amount to less than 10,500 ! Every additional information I obtain, and the opinions of the best informed persons with whom I am acquainted, confirm me in the opinion, that this estimate is too low, that the havock is far greater, however difficult it may be to bring the mind to contemplate a scene of horror which outdoes all that has ever been perpetrated in the name of religion by all the savage nations put together. These cruelties, together with the contempt which the Hindoos feel for the body as a mere temporary shell, cast off at pleasure, and the disorganizing effects of the cast, render them exceedingly unfeeling and cruel : of which their want of every national provision for the destitute ; their leaving multitudes to perish before their own doors, unpitied and even unnoticed ; the inhuman manner in which they burn the bodies of their deceased relations, and their savage triumph when spectators of a widow burning in the flames of the funeral pile, are awful examples.

But to know the Hindoo idolatry, AS IT IS, a person must wade through the filth of the thirty-six pooranūs and other popular books—he must read and hear the modern popular poems and songs—he must follow the bramhūn through his midnight orgies, before the image of Kalēē, and other goddesses ; or he must accompany him to the nightly revels, the jatras, and listen to the filthy dialogues which are rehearsed respecting Krishnū and the daughters of the milkmen ; or he must watch him, at midnight, choking, with the mud and waters of the Ganges, a

wealthy rich relation, while in the delirium of a fever ; or, at the same hour, while murdering an unfaithful wife, or a supposed domestic enemy ; burning the body before it is cold, and washing the blood from his hands in the sacred stream of the Ganges ; or he must look at the bramhūn, hurrying the trembling half-dead widow round the funeral pile, and throwing her, like a log of wood, by the side of the dead body of her husband, tying her, and then holding her down with bamboo levers till the fire has deprived her of the power of rising and running away.—After he has followed the bramhūn through all these horrors, he will only have approached the threshold of this temple of Moloch, and he will begin to be convinced, that to know the Hindoo idolatry, AS IT IS, a man must become a Hindoo—rather, he must become a bramhūn ; for a poor shōōdrū, by the very circumstances of his degradation, is restrained from many abominations which bramhūns alone are privileged to commit. And when he has done this, let him meditate on this system in its effects on the mind of the afflicted or dying Hindoo, as described in vol. ii. pp. 163, 164, and 176 ; on reading which description he will perceive, that in distress the Hindoo utters the loudest murmurs against the gods, and dies in the greatest perplexity and agitation of mind.

The state of things serves to explain the mysterious dispensations of Providence, in permitting the Hindoos to remain so long in darkness, and in causing them to suffer so much formerly under their Mahometan oppressors. The murder of so many myriads of victims has armed heaven against them. Let us hope that now, in the midst of judgment, a gracious Providence has remembered mercy, and placed them under the fostering care of the British government, that they may enjoy a happiness to which they have been hitherto strangers.

If then this system of heathenism communicates no purifying knowledge of the divine perfections, supplies no one motive to holiness while living, no comfort to the afflicted, no hope to the dying ; but on the contrary excites to every vice, and hardens its followers in the most flagrant crimes ; how are we to account for

the conduct of its apologists, except in the recollection, that the sceptical part of mankind have always been partial to heathenism. Voltaire, Gibbon, Hume, &c. have been often charged with a strong partiality for the Grecian and Roman idolatries; and many Europeans in India are suspected of having made large strides towards heathenism. Even Sir Wm. Jones, whose recommendation of the Holy Scriptures (found in his Bible after his death) has been so often and so deservedly quoted, it is said, to please his pūndit, was accustomed to study the shastrūs with the image of a Hindoo god placed on his table:—his fine metrical translations of idolatrous hymns are known to every lover of verse^d. In the same spirit, we observe, that figures and allusions to the ancient idolatries are retained in almost all modern poetical compositions, and even in some Christian writings.

However wonderful this partiality of professed Christians to heathenism may be, it is not more extraordinary than the extravagant lengths into which some learned men have gone in their expectations from the antiquity of the Hindoo writings. Mr. Halhed seems to prefer Hindooism to Christianity purely on account of its boasted antiquity^d. Dr. Stiles, president of Yale

^d ‘I could not help feeling a degree of regret, in reading lately the Memoirs of the admirable and estimable Sir William Jones. Some of his researches in Asia have no doubt incidentally served the cause of religion; but did he think the last possible direct service had been rendered to Christianity, that his accomplished mind was left at leisure for hymns to the Hindoo gods? Was not this a violation even of the neutrality, and an offence, not only against the gospel, but against theism itself? I know what may be said about personification, license of poetry, and so on: but should not a worshipper of God hold himself under a solemn obligation to abjure all tolerance of even poetical figures that can seriously seem, in any way whatever, to recognize the pagan divinities, or abominations, as the prophets of Jehovah would have called them? What would Elijah have said to such an employment of talents? It would have availed little to have told him, that these divinities were only personifications (with their appropriate representative idols) of objects in nature, of elements, or of abstractions. He would have sternly replied—And was not Baal, whose prophets I destroyed, the same?’ See *Foster’s incomparable Essays*.

* Is Mr. Halhed an example of the amazing credulity of unbelievers in

College, in North America, formed such an enthusiastic expectation from the amazing antiquity of the Hindoo writings, that he actually wrote to Sir William Jones, to request him to search among the Hindoos for the Adamic books. Had not this gentleman been a zealous Christian, it is likely his extravagant expectations might have led him to ask Sir William to translate and send him a book two or three millions of years old, written in some külpü amidst the endless succession of worlds.

For some time, a very unjust and unhappy impression appeared to have been made on the public mind, by the encomiums passed on the Hindoo writings. In the first place, they were thus elevated in their antiquity beyond the Christian scriptures, the writings of Moses having been called the productions of yesterday, compared with those of the bramhüns. The contents of these books also were treated with the greatest reverence; the primitive religion of the Hindoos, it was said, revealed the most sublime doctrines, and inculcated a pure morality. We were taught to make the greatest distinction between the ancient and modern religion of the Hindoos; for the apologists for Hindooism did not approve of its being judged of by present appearances. Some persons endeavoured to persuade us, that the Hindoos were not every case wherein the *Holy Bible* is not concerned? When he wrote his 'Code of Gentoo Laws,' he hesitated to believe the Bible, because it was outdone in chronology by the histories of the Chinese and Hindoos. With sacred reverence he exclaims, at the close of his account of the four yoo-güs, 'To such antiquity the Mosaic creation is but as yesterday; and to such ages the life of Methuselah is no more than a span!' He says, in another page, 'The conscientious scruples of Brydone will always be of some weight in the scale of philosophy.' If the age or reign of Brümha, viz. 55,987,200,000,000 years, excited such sacred awe in the mind of this gentleman, what would have been his sensations, and how strong his faith in the 'holy writ' of the Hindoos, if he had happened to read in the Ramayünü the account of Ramü's army; which, this 'holy writ' says, amounted to 1,000,000,000,000,000,000 soldiers, or rather monkies! Again, two thousand times the four yoo-güs, or 8,640,000,000 years, is the age of the sage Markündékü! What, in the name of Mr. Halhed, is the life of Methuselah to this?—This unbeliever in Moses became at last, it is said, a firm believer in *Richard Brothers!*

idolaters, because they maintained the unity of God; though they worshipped the works of their own hands as God, and though the number of their gods was 330,000,000. It is very probable, that the unity of God has been a sentiment amongst the philosophers of every age; and that they wished it to be understood, that they worshipped the One God, whether they bowed before the image of Moloch, Jupiter, or Kalēē: yet mankind have generally concluded, that he who worships an image is an idolater; and I suppose they will continue to think so, unless, in this age of reason, common sense should be turned out of doors.

Now, however, the world has had some opportunity of deciding upon the claims of the Hindoo writings, both as it respects their antiquity, and the value of their contents. Mr. Colebrooke's essay on the védūs, and his other important translations; the Bhūgūvūt-Gēēta, translated by Mr. Wilkins; the translation of the Ramayūnū, several volumes of which have been printed; some valuable papers in the Asiatic Researches; with other translations by different Sūngskritū scholars; have thrown a great body of light on this subject:—and this light is daily increasing.

Many an object appears beautiful when seen at a distance, and through a mist; but when the fog has dispersed, and the person has approached it, he smiles at the deception. Such is the exact case with these books, and this system of idolatry. Because the public, for want of being more familiar with the subject, could not ascertain the point of time when the Hindoo shastrūs were written, they therefore at once believed the assertions of the bramhūns and their friends, that their antiquity was unfathomable.

The Reverend Mr. Maurice has attempted to describe the Hindoo ceremonies, which he never saw, in the most captivating terms, and has painted these 'abominable idolatries' in the most florid colours. It might have been expected, (idolatry being in itself an act so degrading to man, and so dishonourable

to God,) that a Christian divine would have been shocked while writing in this manner. If Mr. Maurice think there is something in Hindooism to excite the most sublime ideas, let him come and join in the dance before the idol;—or assist the bramhüns in crying *Hüree bul! Hüree bul!*^f while the fire is seizing the limbs of the young and unfortunate Hindoo widow;—or let him attend at the sacrificing of animals before the images of Kalēē and Doorga;—or come and join in the dance, stark naked, in the public street, in open day, before the image of Doorga, in the presence of thousands of spectators, young and old, male and female. He will find, that the sight will never make these holy bramhüns, these mild and innocent Hindoos, blush for a moment.—Seriously, should sights like these raise the ardour of enthusiasm, or chill the blood of a Christian minister? Say, ye who blush for human nature sunk in shame. As a clergyman, Mr. Maurice should have known, that antiquity sanctifies nothing:—‘The sinner, being an hundred years old, shall be accursed.’

What will a sober Christian say to the two following paragraphs, inserted in the fifth volume of the *Indian Antiquities*? ‘Mr. Forbes, of Stanmore-hill, in his elegant museum of Indian rarities, numbers two of the bells that have been used in devotion by the bramhüns. They are great curiosities, and one of them in particular appears to be of very high antiquity, in form very much resembling the cup of the lotos; and the tune of it is uncommonly soft and melodious. I could not avoid being

^f Sounds of triumph, which the bramhüns use when the fire of the funeral pile begins to burn, and when they are choking a dying person with the water of the Ganges. These words literally mean, ‘call upon Hüree,’ or repeat the name of Hüree, viz. Krishnü. In their popular use, they are like the English phrase, *huzza! huzza!*

^g While the author cannot but withhold his assent from Mr. Maurice’s application of the Hindoo triad, and the whole of his attempt to illustrate Scripture doctrines from the ancient systems of idolatry, he embraces this opportunity of expressing his admiration of the great merit of this singular and masterly work.

deeply affected with the sound of an instrument which had been actually employed to kindle the flame of that superstition, which I have attempted so extensively to unfold. My transported thoughts travelled back to the remote period, when the bramhūn religion blazed forth in all its splendour in the caverns of Elephanta: I was, for a moment, entranced, and caught the ardour of enthusiasm. A tribe of venerable priests, arrayed in flowing stoles, and decorated with high tiaras, seemed assembled around me; the mystic song of initiation vibrated in my ear; I breathed an air fragrant with the richest perfumes, and contemplated the Deity in the fire that symbolized him.' In another place:—'She [the Hindoo religion] wears the similitude of a beautiful and radiant CHERUB from HEAVEN, bearing on his persuasive lips the accents of pardon and peace, and on his silken wings beneficence and blessing.'

The sacred scriptures, of which this writer professes to be a teacher, in every part, mark idolatry as THE ABOMINABLE THING WHICH GOD HATETH. Mr. Maurice calls it, 'a beautiful and radiant cherub from heaven.' How this Christian minister will reconcile his ideas of idolatry with those of his GREAT MASTER in the great day of final account, I must leave; but I recommend to him, and to all Europeans who think there is not much harm in Hindooism, the perusal of the following passages from the word of the TRUE and LIVING GOD:—

'If thy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend, which is as thine own soul, entice thee secretly, saying, Let us go and serve other gods, which thou hast not known, thou, nor thy fathers; (namely, of the gods of the people which are round about you, nigh unto thee, or far off from thee, from the one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth;) thou shalt not consent unto him, nor hearken unto him; neither shall thine eye pity him, neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal him: but thou shalt surely kill him; thine hand shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterwards the hand of all

the people. And thou shalt stone him with stones, that he die; because he hath sought to thrust thee away from the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage. And all Israel shall hear and fear, and shall do no more any such wickedness as this is among you.' *Deut.* xiii. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.—I quote this remarkable passage, not because I think the Christian dispensation allows of punishing idolaters with death, but to shew how marked is the divine abhorrence of this sin.

'And I will destroy your high places, and cut down your images, and cast your carcasses upon the carcasses of your idols, and my soul shall abhor you.' *Leviticus* xxvi. 30.—'Cursed be the man that maketh any *graven image*, any *graven* or *molten image*, an abomination unto the Lord, the work of the hands of the craftsmen, and putteth it in a secret place. And all the people shall answer and say, Amen.' *Deut.* xxvii. 15.—'Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, Ye have seen all the evil that I have brought upon Jerusalem, and upon all the cities of Judah; and, behold, this day they are a desolation, and no man dwelleth therein. Because of their wickedness which they have committed to provoke me to anger, in that they went to burn incense, and to serve *other gods*, whom they knew not, neither they, ye, nor your fathers. Howbeit, I sent unto you all my servants the prophets, rising early and sending them, saying, O DO NOT THIS ABOMINABLE THING THAT I HATE. But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear to turn from their wickedness, to burn no incense unto *other gods*. Wherefore my fury and mine anger was poured forth, and was kindled in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem; and they are wasted and desolate, as at this day.' *Jeremiah* xlv. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.—'And what agreement hath the temple of God with *idols*?' *2 Cor.* vi. 16.—'For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and *abominable idolatries*.' *1 Peter* iv. 3.—'But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whore-

mongers, and sorcerers, and *idolaters*, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.' *Rev.* xxi. 3.

Let every conscientious Christian fairly weigh these portions of the divine word, and then say, whether there be not, according to the spirit of these passages, a great degree of criminality attached to the person who in any way countenances idolatry. I am not ashamed to confess, that I fear more for the continuance of the British power in India, from the encouragement which Englishmen have given to the idolatry of the Hindoos, than from any other quarter whatever. The Governor of the world said to the Israelites, in particular reference to idolatry, 'If ye walk contrary to me, I will walk contrary to you.' Moses, in the name of Jehovah, thus threatens the Jews, if they countenance idolatry:—'I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that ye shall soon utterly perish from off the land whereunto ye go over Jordan to possess it: ye shall not prolong your days upon it, but shall utterly be destroyed.' It cannot be doubted, that in every case in which either a person, or a nation, begins to think favourably of idolatry, it is a mark of departure in heart and practice from the living God: it was always so considered among the Jews. There is scarcely any thing in Hindooism, when truly known, in which a learned man can delight, or of which a benevolent man can approve; and I am fully persuaded, that there will soon be but one opinion on the subject, and that this opinion will be, that the Hindoo system is less ancient than the Egyptian, and that it is the most PUERILE, IMPURE, AND BLOODY OF ANY SYSTEM OF IDOLATRY THAT WAS EVER ESTABLISHED ON EARTH.

To this description of the Hindoo Mythology, the author has added accounts of the principal Hindoo Seceders, including the sects founded by Booddhü, Rishübhü-dévü, Nanükü, and Choi-tünyü.

All the founders of these sects appear to have been religious

mendicants, who, animated by excessive enthusiasm, have attempted to carry certain points of the Hindoo system farther than the regular Hindoos, particularly those which respect severe mortifications. Nanūkū and Choitūnyū were less rigid, and do not seem to have pressed the importance of religious austerities. Booddhū and Rishūbhū-dévū evidently adhered to the systems of those Hindoo philosophers who were atheists^h.

Both these systems are comprised in two or three doctrines:—the world is eternal, and possesses in itself the energy which gives rise to what we call creation, preservation, and resuscitation; religion (Dhūrmū) regulates all states, and is in fact what Christians call providence, connected with absolute predestination; the person who acquires the greatest portion of dhūrmū becomes a personification of religion, procures happiness for himself, and deserves the worship of others. Amongst all excellent qualities, compassion is the cardinal virtue, especially as manifested in a rigid care not to hurt or destroy sentient beings.

Without abating an atom of our abhorrence and contempt of a scheme of religion which excludes a God, it is a singular feature of this system of atheism, that it has placed the sceptre of universal government in an imagined being under the name of Religion; or, to speak more correctly, in the hands of two beings, Religion and Irreligion, who have the power of rewarding and punishing the virtuous and the vicious. In short, these heresiarchs have not promulgated a system of atheism, without making some provision for the interests of morality in their way; and if the idea of punishment alone would make men virtuous, a Booddhū and a Joinū might attain a place in the niche of fame not much below thousands who believe in a First Cause.

^h The Shrēe-bhagūvūtū mentions Booddhū as the son of Unjūnū, of Kēekūtū; and that Charvvakū, a celebrated atheist, embraced and published the real opinions of Booddhū. See Shrēe-bhagūvūtū, chap. i. sect. 3.

As men are born under a certain destiny, and as every action produces its destined fruit, little is left to human exertion, and in consequence religious ceremonies have little place in these systems. The only object of worship is a deceased or living perfect ascetic: the former has temples erected to his memory, which contain his image, and before which a few ceremonies are performed similar to those before the Hindoo idols; and the living mendicant is worshipped by the devout wherever he happens to rest from his peregrinations.

These men have almost entirely excluded from their system a social life; and at present those Joinūs, who find the rules of their guides too strict, are obliged to solicit the forms of marriage at the hands of some Hindoo priest. In the translation of the *Témee Jatū*, a Bouddhū work, (see vol. ii. p. 221,) the reader will perceive, that a monarch and all his subjects abandoned a civil life at the call of the monarch's son, an ascetic, and sought in a forest that abstraction from secular concerns which they considered as an essential preparation for re-union to the divine essence.

The ceremonies of these two sects are all comprised in the worshipping of their saints, rehearsing their praises, listening to their sayings or written works, and a rigid care to avoid the destruction of animal life, even in its most diminutive forms. The Bouddhūs and Joinūs have not excluded, it is true, every thing pleasant from their religion; for a number of festivals are celebrated among them monthly or annually; but there is reason to suppose, that these are no parts of the original system, but the additions of mendicants less rigid in their principles and less austere in their manners.

The Joinūs speak of the Bouddhūs with a degree of contempt, as being very loose in their practice; particularly as it regards the destruction of animal life. From this circumstance, and from the Joinūs being still found in Hindoosthanū, as well as from the fact that they trace their religion up to a very early

Hindoo monarch, it may be conjectured, that they are the oldest of the two sects, and are the scattered remnants of those persecuted under the name of atheists, after the destruction of the Goutīmū dynasty, or, as they were then called, Bouddhūs.

Nanūkū, the Shikh leader, does not appear to have had any connection with the atheists; he disapproved of the excessive polytheism of the Hindoos, and wished to draw them to the worship of the one God, whom, however, he called by the names usually adopted by the Hindoos: Brūmhū, Pūrūm-éshwūrū, Unadee, Nirakarū, &c. He did not publicly reprobate those parts of the Hindoo system to which he was most averse, but contented himself with observing, that while he left them indifferent, the practice of them would not be accompanied with the benefits held out by the Hindoo writers. He formed, from the bramhinal system, a new one, having little polytheism in it, but borrowing all its principal doctrines from the Hindoo writings; and he and his successors incorporated the whole in two volumes. The principal tenets of this seceder are:—There is one invisible God, who is to be worshipped or honoured in holy men; his name is to be repeated; the spiritual guide is to be revered; all evil avoided: if images be adopted, they should be those of eminent ascetics. Future happiness, consisting in union to the divine nature, is secured to those Shikhs who observe the rules laid down by their sacred books.

Choitūnyū, the last of the seceders, departed still less from regular Hindooism: his principal opposition was aimed at the rising sect of the shaktūs, or those who worship the female deities with bloody sacrifices: he testified his abhorrence of the destruction of animal life in sacrifices, and professed to be a rigid Voishnūvū, adopting Krishnū, or Hūree, as his favourite deity. He did not proscribe the other gods, but set up Vishnoo as uniting all in himself; nor did he explode any tenet of Hindooism beside that relating to bloody sacrifices. A devout attachment to Krishnū; a strict union among all his followers; reverence for religious mendicants; visiting holy places; re-

peating the name of Hūree, and entertaining mendicant Voish-nūvūs, compose the prime articles in the creed of this sect.

Such are the systems established by these Hindoo heresiarchs, each of which, though different in many essential points, is distinguished by one remarkable feature, reverence for mendicant saints, especially those who seem to have carried abstraction of mind, seclusion from the world, and religious austerities to the greatest lengths. Among the atheistical sects, these mendicants are regarded as personifications of religion; and among the two last, as partial incarnations, or persons approaching the state of re-union to the Great Spirit.

Respecting the priority of the atheistical or the bramhinal systems, the author has not been able entirely to satisfy his own mind. Some persons conjecture, that they see a coincidence betwixt the doctrines of the védūs, and of the atheistical sects, respecting the origin of things, and the worship of the elements. It may be safely added, that to these systems succeeded the pouranic mythology, and after that the worship of the female deities with bloody sacrifices. The whole of these systems, however, when more generally known, will, no doubt, exceedingly endear the 'WORD OF TRUTH' to every sincere Christian, and more and more prove, how deep and important a stake he has in the '*glorious gospel* of the BLESSED GOD.'

THE
HINDOO MYTHOLOGY.

BOOK I.
OBJECTS OF WORSHIP.

CHAP. I.
OF GOD.

IT is a painful reflection to every benevolent mind, that not a single Hindoo temple, dedicated to the ONE GOD, is to be found in all Hindoost'han; nor is any act of worship, in any form, addressed by this people to God. The doctrines respecting the Divine Nature are considered as mere philosophical speculations, totally unconnected with religious services.

It is true, indeed, that the Hindoos believe in the unity of God. 'One Brūmhū, without a second,' is a phrase very commonly used by them when conversing on subjects which relate to the nature of God. They believe also that God is almighty, allwise, omnipresent, omniscient, &c. and they frequently speak of him as embracing in his government the happiness of the good, and the subjection or punishment of the bad: yet they have no idea of God's performing any act, either of creation or providence, except through the gods; and thus are prevented all the beneficial effects which might have arisen out of their

notions of the divine perfections : for in the whole of the reigning superstition the gods alone are seen ; and these gods bear no more resemblance to the one true God, than darkness to light, than vice to virtue.

Perceiving, therefore, that the speculations of the Hindoo philosophers on the divine nature have no place whatever in the religion of the country, I have placed these dogmas in the preceding volume.

CHAP. II.

OF THE GODS.

THE deities in the Hindoo pantheon amount to 330,000,000. Yet all these gods and goddesses may be resolved into the three principal ones, Vishnoo, Shivü, and Brümha; the elements; and the three females, Doorga, Lükshmēē, and Sürüswütēē. The following pages will contain accounts of all those at present worshipped by the Hindoos, particularly in the provinces of India under the English government.

SECT. I.—*Vishnoo.*

THIS god is represented in the form of a black man, with four arms; in one of which he holds a club, in another a shell, in the third a chükrü^a, and in the fourth a water-lily. He rides on Gūroorü, an animal half-bird and half-man, and wears yellow garments.

^a An iron instrument of destruction like a wheel.

The Hindoo shastrŭs give accounts of ten appearances or incarnations of Vishnoo, in the character of the Preserver; nine of which are said to be past.

The first is called the Mŭtsyŭ incarnation. Brŭmhŭ^b, the one God, when he resolves to recreate the universe after a periodical destruction, first gives birth to Brŭmha, Vishnoo, and Shivŭ, to preside over the work of creation, preservation, and destruction. After a periodical dissolution of the universe, the four vĕdŭs remained in the waters. In order to enter upon the work of creation, it was necessary to obtain these books, for the instruction of Brŭmha. Vishnoo was therefore appointed to bring up the vĕdŭs from the deep; who, taking the form of a fish, (some say one kind and some another,) descended into the waters, and brought up these sacred books.

In the Kŭchyŭpŭ incarnation Vishnoo assumed the form of a tortoise, and took the newly created earth upon his back, to render it stable. The Hindoos believe that to this hour the earth is supported on the back of this tortoise.

The Vŭrahŭ incarnation happened at one of the periodical destructions of the world, when the earth sunk into the waters. Vishnoo, the preserver, appearing in the form of a boar (vŭrahŭ), descended into the waters, and with his tusks drew up the earth. What contemptible ideas on such a subject! The earth, with all its mountains, &c. &c. made fast on the back of a turtle, or drawn up from the deep by the tusks of a hog!

^b The reader will please to keep in mind that Brŭmhiŭ means the one God, and that Brŭmha means the idol of that name.

The fourth incarnation is called Nürü-singhü^c. Among other descendants of Dūkshū, (the first man that Brümha created,) was Kūshyüpü, a moonee, and his four wives, Ditee, Ūditee, Vinūta, and Kūdroo. From Ditee, sprang the giants; from Ūditee, the gods; from Vinūta, Gūroorü; and from Kūdroo, the hydras. The giants possessed amazing strength, and amongst them two arose of terrific powers, named Hirünyakshü and Hirünyü-kūshipoo, both of whom performed religious austerities many thousand years to obtain immortality. Brümha at length gave them a blessing apparently equivalent to that which they desired. He promised, that no common being should destroy them; that they should not die either in the day or in the night, in earth or in heaven, by fire, by water, or by the sword. After this these giants conquered all the kingdoms of the earth, and even dethroned Indrü, the king of heaven. Indrü, collecting all the gods, went to Brümha, and intreated him to provide some way of deliverance, as the universe which he had created was destroyed. Brümha asked the gods, how he could destroy those who had obtained his blessing? and advised them to go to Vishnoo. They obeyed, and informed this god of the miseries brought upon the universe by these giants whom Brümha had blessed. Narayünü promised to destroy them, which he did in the following manner: Hirünyü-kūshipoo's son Prülhadü was constantly absent from home performing religious austerities, at which his father became angry, and, tying a stone to his body, threw him into the water; but Vishnoo descended, and liberated him. His father next threw him under the feet of an elephant; but the elephant took him up, and put him on its back. He then built a house of sealing wax, put his son into it, and set it on fire; the wax melted, and

^c From nürü, a man; and singhü, a lion.

fell upon Prülhadü, but he received no injury. The father next gave him poison, but without effect. At length, wearied of trying to kill him, he said, 'Where does your preserver Vishnoo dwell?' 'He is every where,' says Prülhadü. 'Is he then in this pillar?' 'Yes,' said the son. 'Then,' said Hirünyü-küshipoo, 'I will kill him,' and gave the pillar a blow with his stick—when Vishnoo, in the form of half-lion, half-man, burst from the pillar; laid hold of Hirünyü-küshipoo by the thighs with his teeth, and tore him up the middle. This was in the evening, so that it was neither in the day nor in the night; it was done under the droppings of the thatch, about which the Hindoos have a proverb, that this place is out of the earth; he was not killed by a man, but by a being half-man, half-lion: so that the promise of Brümha to him was not broken. Vishnoo next destroyed Hirünyakshü. After the death of his father, Prülhadü began to worship Vishnoo under the form which he had assumed, and with tears enquired into the future fate of his father. Vishnoo assured him, that as he had died by his hands, he would surely ascend to heaven. Vishnoo was so pleased with the praises which Prülhadü bestowed on him, that he began to dance, hanging the entrails of Hirünyü-küshipoo round his neck. By Vishnoo's dancing the earth began to move out of its place, so that Brümha and all the gods were frightened, but durst not go near him. However, at the entreaties of Prülhadü, Vishnoo gave over dancing; the earth became fixed, and Vishnoo gave Prülhadü this promise, that by his hands none of his race should die.

The fifth is the Vamünü incarnation. Prülhadü's grandson Bulee followed the steps of his great-grandfather, and committed every kind of violence. In contempt of the gods, he made offerings in his own name. He performed the üshwümédhü sacrifice one hundred times, by which he

was entitled to become the king of the gods ; but as the time of the then reigning Indrū was not expired, the latter applied for relief to Vishnoo, who promised to destroy this giant : to accomplish which he caused himself to be born of Ūditee, the wife of Kūshyūpū, the moonee. Being exceedingly small in his person, he obtained the name of Vamūnū, i. e. the dwarf. At a certain period king Būlee was making a great sacrifice, and Vamūnū's parents, being very poor, sent him to ask a gift of the king. It is customary, at a festival, to present gifts to bramhūns. Vamūnū was so small, that in his journey to the place of sacrifice, when he got to the side of a hole made by a cow's foot, and which was filled with water, he thought it was a river, and entreated another bramhūn to help him over it. On his arrival, he went to ask a gift of Būlee. The king was so pleased with him, on account of his diminutive form, that he promised to give him whatever he should ask. He petitioned only for as much land as he could measure by three steps. Būlee pressed him to ask for more, intimating that such a quantity was nothing ; but Vamūnū persisted, and the king ordered his priest to read the usual formulas in making such a present. The priest warned the king, declaring he would repent of making this gift ; for the little bramhūn was no other than Vishnoo himself, who would deprive him of all he had. The king, however, was determined to fulfil his promise, and the grant was made. Vamūnū then placed one foot on Indrū's heaven, and the other on the earth, when, lo ! a third leg suddenly projected from his belly, and he asked for a place upon which he might rest this third foot. Būlee, having nothing left, and being unable to fulfil his promise, was full of anxiety. His wife, having heard what was going forward, came to the spot, and, seeing the king's perplexity, advised him to give his head for Vamūnū to set his foot upon. He did so ; but Vamūnū then asked for what is called dūkshinū, a small

present which accompanies a gift, and without which the gift itself produces no fruit to the giver. Būlee knew not what to do for dūkshinū: his all was gone. His wife advised him to give his life to Vamūnū as dūkshinū. He did this also; but the latter told him, that as he had promised Prūlhadū not to destroy any of his race, he would not take his life. He therefore gave him his choice either of ascending to heaven, taking with him five ignorant persons; or of descending to patūlū, the world of the hydras, with five wise men^d. Būlee chose the latter, but said that as he had done much mischief on earth, he was afraid of going to patūlū, lest he should there be punished for his crimes. Vamūnū told him not to fear, as he would, in the form of Vishnoo, become his protector. At the close, this god, having restored every thing on earth to a state of order and prosperity, returned to heaven.

The sixth is the Pūrūshoo-ramū incarnation. Pūrūshoo is the name of an instrument of war. The occasion of this appearance of Vishnoo is thus related:—The kshūtriyūs, from the king to the lowest person of this cast, were become very corrupt. Every one did as he pleased, the king was without authority, all order was destroyed, and the earth was in the greatest confusion. In these circumstances the goddess Prit'hivēē^e went to Vishnoo, and prayed for relief. Her petition was heard, and one part of Vishnoo was incarnate as the son of Jūmūdūgnē, a descendant of Bhrigoo the sage. After twenty-one different defeats the kshūtriyūs were exterminated by Pūrūshoo-ramū; but after a lapse of years they again became numerous: Ūrjoonū, a

^d It is a proverb among the Hindoos, that there is no pleasure in the company of the ignorant in any place or circumstances; and that a bad place, in the company of the wise, is better than a good one in that of the ignorant.

^e The earth personified.

kshūtriyū king with a thousand arms, overcame the greatest monarchs, and made dreadful havock in the world : he beat Ravūnū, and tied him to the heels of a horse ; but Brūmha delivered him, and reconciled them again. One evening in the rainy season, Ūrjoonū, being in the forest, took refuge in the hut of Jūmūdūgneē, the learned ascetic. He had with him 900,000 people ; yet Jūmūdūgneē entertained them all. Ūrjoonū, astonished, enquired of his people how the sage, living in the forest, was able to entertain so many people ? They could not tell ; they saw nothing except a cow which Brūmha had given him ; but it was by her means perhaps that he was able to entertain so many guests : its name was Kamū-dhénoof. In fact, when Ūrjoonū was to be entertained at the sage's house, this cow in a miraculous manner gave him all kinds of food, clothes, &c. The king on his departure asked for the cow ; but the sage refused it to him, though he offered for it his whole kingdom. At length, Ūrjoonū made war on Jūmūdūgneē ; and though the cow gave an army to her master, he was unable to cope with Ūrjoonū, who destroyed both him and his army. After the victory, however, Ūrjoonū could not find the cow, but went home disappointed. Pūrūshoo-ramū, hearing of the defeat and death of his father Jūmūdūgneē, went to complain to Shivū, on the mountain Koilasū ; but could not get access to him till he had knocked down the gods Gūnéshū and Kartikū, Shivū's door-keepers. Shivū gave Pūrūshoo-ramū the instrument pūrūshoo, and promised him the victory. On his return Pūrūshoo-ramū met his mother, who was about to throw herself on the funeral pile of her husband. After attending upon this ceremony, Pūrūshoo-ramū went to the residence of Ūrjoonū, and killed him^s.

^f That is, the cow which yields every thing desired.

^s This story is told variously in the pooranūs : according to the

These six incarnations are said to have taken place in the sūtyū yoogū^h. There are no images respecting them made for worship.

The seventh incarnation is that of Ramū to destroy the giant Ravūnū; for the history of which see the Translation of the Table of Contents of the Ramayūnū, toward the close of this volume.—The eight incarnation is that of Būlūramū, to destroy Prūlūmbū and other giants. This latter incarnation is said to have taken place in the dwapūrū-yoogū.—The ninth is the Booddhū incarnation, in which Vishnoo appeared as Booddhū, to destroy the power of the giants. In order to effect this, Booddhū produced among mankind by his preaching, &c. a disposition to universal scepticism; that having no longer any faith in the gods, the giants might cease to apply to them for those powers by which they had become such dreadful scourges to mankind. In this appearance the object of Vishnoo, the preserver, was accomplished by art, without the necessity of war; though the dreadful alternative to which he was driven to accomplish his object, that of plunging mankind into a state of universal scepticism, affords another proof how wretchedly the world would be governed if every thing depended on the wisdom of man.—The tenth incarnation is still expected, under the name of the Kūlkee ūvūtarū. See translation from the Kūlkee pooranū, in the second volume,

The appearance of Vishnoo, when he took the name of Krishnū to destroy the giant Kūngshū, is called the descent

Ramayūnū, Vūshis'thū was the owner of this cow, and Vishwūmitrū the person who fought with the moonee to obtain it.

^h These ravages of tyranny, and bloody contests, form a sad specimen of the happiness of the Hindoo sūtyū-yoogū, could we believe that there ever had been such a period.

of Vishnoo himself, and not an incarnation of this god. There are, however, beside the preceding ten incarnations, and this of Krishnũ, many others mentioned in the pooranũs, all having their source in Vishnoo.—The Shrēē-bhagũvũtũ contains accounts of the following : Soo-yũgnũ created certain gods, and removed distress from the three worlds ;—Kũpilũ taught his mother the knowledge of Brũmhũ, by which she obtained absorption ;—Dũttatrēyũ delivered all his disciples, by means of the ceremony called yogũ, from future birth, and obtained for them absorption ;—Koormarũ declared the events that had happened in a former age ; that is, previous to the dissolution of things which preceded his incarnation ;—Nũrũ-Narayũnũ was such a perfect ascetic that the courtezans, sent by the gods to allure him from his religious austerities, were unsuccessful ; Vishnoo himself created a female on purpose to divert him from his devotions, but her attempts were equally abortive ;—Prit'hoo opened the bowels of the earth, and brought forth its treasures ;—Rishũvũ was an incomparable yogēē, who was worshipped by the pũrũm-hũngsũs and other ascetics ;—Hũyũgrēēvũ was so great a saint, that the words of the vėdũ were uttered every time he breathed ;—Hũree delivered his disciples from all their enemies, whether among men or the inferior animals ;—Hũngsũ taught his disciples the mysteries of yogũ, and obtained absorption himself while performing the ceremonies of a yogēē ;—Mũnoo's fame filled the three worlds, and ascended even as far as Sũtyũ-lokũ ;—Dhũnwũntũree delivered all diseased persons from their disorders on their mere remembrance of his name, and gave the water of immortality to the gods ;—Vyasũ arranged the vėdũs, was the author of the pooranũs, &c.—Vibhoo was the spiritual guide of 80,000 disciples, whom he taught the knowledge of Brũmhũ, and the ceremonies of yogũ ;—Sũtyũsėnũ cleared the earth of hypocrites and wicked per-

sons;—Voikoont'hũ created the heaven of Vishnoo known by this name, and performed other wonders;—Ūjitũ instructed the gods to churn the sea to obtain the water of immortality, and did other things which distinguished him as an incarnation;—Mohũnēē was incarnate, to prevent the giants from obtaining the water of immortality at the churning of the sea;—Narũdũ revealed the work called Voishnũvũ Tũntrũ. The following incarnations are expected: Sarvũbhoomũ to dethrone the present Indrũ, and instate Bũlee in his stead;—Vishwũksẽnũ as the friend of Shũmbhoo, when he becomes the king of heaven;—Dhũrmũ-sėtoo to nourish the three worlds;—Soodhama to assist Roodrũ-savũrnee, the twelfth of the fourteen mũnoos;—Yogėshwũrũ to place Divũs-pũtee on the throne of Indrũ;—Vrihodbhanoo to make known many new religious ceremonies.—The reader, however, is not to suppose that there are no other incarnations mentioned in these marvellous books: every hero, and every saint, is complimented by these writers as an incarnate deity.

I have not discovered any proof in the Hindoo writings, or in conversation with learned natives, that these incarnate persons are personifications of any of the divine attributes; or that these stories have any other than a literal meaning. No doubt they were written as fables, which the ignorance of modern Hindoos has converted into facts; or many of them may relate to common events here magnified into miracles.

Stone images of Vishnoo are made for sale, and worshipped in the houses of those who have chosen him for their guardian deity. There are no public festivals in honour of this god, yet he is worshipped at the offering of a burnt sacrifice; in the form of meditation used daily by the

brahmũns ; at the times when 'the five gods' are worshipped, and also at the commencement of each shraddhũ. No bloody sacrifices are offered to Vishnoo. The offerings presented to him consist of fruit, flowers, water, clarified butter, sweetmeats, cloth, ornaments, &c.

Many choose Vishnoo for their guardian deity. These persons are called Voishnũvũs. The distinctive mark of this sect of Hindoos consists of two lines, rather oval, drawn the whole length of the nose, and carried forward in two straight lines across the forehead. This mark is common to the worshippers of all the different forms of Vishnoo. It is generally made with the clay of the Ganges ; sometimes with powder of sandel wood.

Vishnoo has a thousand namesⁱ, among which are the following :—Vishnoo ; that is, the being into whom, at the destruction of the world, all is absorbed.—Narayũnũ, or, he who dwelt in the waters^k, and he who dwells in the minds of the devout.—Voikoont'hũ, or, the destroyer of sorrow.—Vishtũrũ-shrũva, or, he who, in the form of Viratũ, is all eye, all ear, &c.—Rhishẽekeshũ, viz. the god of all the members, and of light.—Keshũvũ, or, he who gave being to himself, to Brũmha and Shivũ ; or, he who has excellent hair.—Madhũvũ, or, the husband of Lũkshmeẽ.—Mũdhoo-sõodhũnũ, the destroyer of Mũdhoo, a giant.—Swũmbhõõ, or, the self-existent.—Doityaree, or, the enemy of the

ⁱ The meaning of the principal names of some of the gods is to be found in the comment upon the Umũrũ-koshũ, by Bhũrũtũ-mũllikũ.

Jupiter had so many names, they could scarcely be numbered ; some of them derived from the places where he lived and was worshipped, and others from the actions he performed.

^k At the time of a prũlyũ, when every thing is reduced to the element of water, Vishnoo sits on the snake Unũntũ, which has 1000 heads,

giants.—Poondūrēekakshū, or, he whose eyes are like the white lotus.—Govindū, or, the raiser of the earth.—Pitamvūrū, or, he who wears yellow garments.—Ūchyootū, or, the undecayable.—Sharūngēē, or, he who possesses the horn bow.—Vishwūkshénū, or, he whose soldiers fill all quarters of the world.—Jūnarddūnū, or, he who afflicts the wicked, and, he of whom emancipation is sought.—Pūdmūnabhū, or, he whose navel is like the water lily.—Vishwūmvūrū, or, the protector of the world.—Koitūbhūjit, or, he who overcame the giant Koitūbhū.

Vishnoo has two wives¹, Lūkshmēē, the goddess of prosperity, and Sūrūswūtēē, the goddess of learning. The former was produced at the churning of the sea: Sūrūswūtēē is the daughter of Brūmha.

The following description of the heaven of Vishnoo is taken from the Mūhabharūtū. This heaven, called Voikōont'hū^m, is entirely of gold, and is eighty thousand miles in circumference. All its edifices are composed of jewels. The pillars of this heaven, and all the ornaments of the buildings, are of precious stones. The chrystal waters of the Ganges fall from the higher heavens on the head of

¹ One of the Hindoo poets, in answer to the question, Why has Vishnoo assumed a wooden shape? (alluding to the image of Jūgūnat'hū,) says, 'The troubles in his family have turned Vishnoo into wood: in the first place, he has two wives, one of whom (the goddess of learning) is constantly talking, and the other (the goddess of prosperity) never remains in one place: to increase his troubles, he sits on a snake; his dwelling is in the water, and he rides on a bird.' All the Hindoos acknowledge that it is a great misfortune for a man to have two wives; especially if both live in one house.

^m The work called Kūrmū-Vipakū says, that the heavens of Vishnoo, Brūmha, and Shivū are upon three peaks of the mountain Sooméeroo; and that at the bottom of these peaks are the heavens of twenty-one other gods.

Droovŭ, and from thence into the bunches of hair on the heads of seven rishees in this heaven, and from thence they fall and form a river in Voikoont'hŭ. Here are also fine pools of water, containing blue, red, and white water-lilies, the flowers of some of which contain one hundred petals, and others a thousand; gardens of nymphœas, &c. On a seat as glorious as the meridian sun, sitting on water-lilies, is Vishnoo, and on his right hand the goddess Lŭkshmĕē. From the body of Lŭkshmĕē the fragrance of the lotus extends 800 miles. This goddess shines like a continued blaze of lightning. The dĕvŭrshees, rajŭrshees, and sŭptŭrshees constantly celebrate the praise of Vishnoo and Lukshmĕē, and meditate on their divine forms. The brŭmhŭrshĕēs chant the vĕdŭs. The glorified voishnŭvŭs approach Vishnoo, and constantly serve him. The godsⁿ are also frequently employed in celebrating the praises of Vishnoo; and Gŭroorŭ, the bird-god, is the door-keeper.



SECT. II.—*Shivŭ.*

SHIVU, the destroyer, has the second place among the Hindoo deities, though in general, in allusion to their offices, these three gods are classed thus: Brŭmha, Vishnoo, Shivŭ.

This god is represented in various ways. In the form of meditation used daily by the bramhŭns he is described as a silver coloured man, with five faces; an additional eye^o

ⁿ These gods are supposed to be visitors at Vishnoo's.

^o One of the names of Shivŭ is Trilŭchŭnŭ, viz. the three-eyed. One of the names of Jupiter was Trioculus, (Triophthalmos,) given him by the Greeks, because he had three eyes. An image of this kind was set up in Troy, which, beside the usual two eyes, had a third in the forehead.

and a half-moon grace each forehead^p. He has four arms; in one hand he holds a pūrūshoo; in the second a deer; with the third he is bestowing a blessing, and with the fourth he forbids fear: he sits on a lotus^q, and wears a tyger-skin garment.

At other times Shivū is represented with one head, three eyes, and two arms, riding on a bull, covered with ashes, naked, his eyes inflamed with intoxicating herbs^r, having in one hand a horn, and in the other a drum.

Another image of Shivū is the lingū, a smooth black stone almost in the form of a sugar-loaf, with a projection at the base like the mouth of a spoon.

There are several stories in the pooranūs respecting the origin of the lingū worship, three of which I had translated, and actually inserted in this work, leaving out as much as possible of their offensive parts: but in correcting the proofs, they appeared too gross, even when refined as much as possible, to meet the public eye. It is true I have omitted them with some reluctance, because I wish that the

^p At the churning of the sea, Shivū obtained the moon for his share, and fixed it, with all its glory, in his forehead.

^q It appears that this plant was formerly venerated by the Egyptians as much as it is now by the Hindoos. The sacred images of the Tartars, Japanese, and other nations are also frequently represented as placed upon it.

^r Bacchus, who appears to bear a pretty strong resemblance to Shivū, is said to have wandered about naked, or to have had no other covering than a tyger's skin, which is the common garment of Shivū, and of his followers, the sūnyasēes. The bloated image of Shivū corresponds with that of Bacchus; and though the Indian god did not intoxicate himself with wine, yet his image is evidently that of a drunkard. Shivū perpetually smoked intoxicating herbs.

apologists for idolatry should be left without excuse, and that the sincere Christian should know what those who wish to rob him of the Christian Religion mean to leave in its stead.

From these abominable stories, temples innumerable have arisen in India, and a Shivü lingü placed in each of them, and WORSHIPPED AS A GOD!! These temples, indeed, in Bengal and many parts of Hindoost'han, are far more numerous than those dedicated to any other idol; and the number of the daily worshippers of this scandalous image, (even among the Hindoo women,) who make the image with the clay of the Ganges every morning and evening, is beyond comparison far greater than the worshippers of all the other gods put together.

The account of the origin of the phalli of the Greeks bears a strong and unaccountable resemblance to some parts of the pouranic accounts of the lingü: Bacchus was angry with the Athenians, because they despised his solemnities, when they were first brought by Pegasus out of Bœotia into Attica; for which he afflicted them with a grievous disease, that could have no cure, till, by the advice of the oracles, they paid due reverence to the god, and erected phalli to his honour; whence the feasts and sacrifices called Phallica were yearly celebrated among the Athenians.—The story of Priapus is too indecent, and too well known to need recital. Should the reader wish for farther information on this subject, he is referred to an extract from Diodorus Siculus, as given in the Reverend Mr. Maurice's second volume of Indian Antiquities. The perusal of this extract may help further to convince the reader that the old idolatry, and that of the present race of Hindoos, at least in their abominable nature, and in some of their prominent features, are ONE.

Beside the clay image of the lingū, there are two kinds of black stone lingūs: these are set up in the Hindoo temples^s. The first is called swūyūmbōō, (the self-existent,) or ūnadee^t, that which has no beginning. The second they call vanū-lingū, because Vanū, a king, first instituted the worship of this image. These stones are brought from the neighbourhood of the river Gūndhūkēē, which falls into the Ganges near Patna. The images are made by Hindoo and Mūşulman stone-cutters.

There is another form in which Shivū is worshipped, called Mūha-kalū. This is the image of a smoke-coloured boy with three eyes, clothed in red garments. His hair stands erect; his teeth are very large; he wears a necklace of human skulls, and a large turban of his own hair; in one hand he holds a stick, and in the other the foot of a bedstead; he has a large belly, and makes a very terrific appearance. Shivū is called Mūha-kalū, because he destroys all; by which the Hindoos mean, that all is absorbed in him at last, in order to be reproduced^u.

Images of this form of Shivū are not made in Bengal; but a pan of water, or an ūnadee-lingū, is substituted, before which bloody sacrifices are offered, and other cere-

^s It is remarkable, that a stone image, consecrated to Venus, bore a strong resemblance to the lingū. Of this stone it is said, that it was "from the top to the bottom of an orbicular figure, a little broad beneath; the circumference was small, and sharpening towards the top like a sugar loaf. The reason unknown."

^t At the time of a great drought, the Hindoos, after performing its worship, throw very large quantities of water upon this ūnadee-lingū, in order to induce Shivū to give them rain.

^u Some say Saturn received his name, because he was satisfied with the years he devoured. Saturn was also represented as devouring his children, and vomiting them up again.

monies performed, in the month Choitrū, at the new moon. Only a few persons perform this worship. Except before this image, bloody sacrifices are never offered to Shivū, who is himself called a voishnūvū, i. e. a worshipper of Vishnoo, before whose image no animals are slain, and whose disciples profess never to eat animal food.

Under different names other images of Shivū are described in the shastrūs; but none of these images are made at present, nor is any public worship offered to them.

Those who receive the name of Shivū from their spiritual guides, are called Soivyūs. The mark on the forehead which these persons wear, is composed of three curved lines like a half-moon, to which is added a round dot on the nose. It is made either with the clay of the Ganges, or with sandal wool, or the ashes of cow-dung.

Worship is performed daily at the temples of the lingū; when offerings of various kinds are presented to this image. If the temple belong to a shōōdrū, a bramhūn is employed, who receives a small annual gratuity, and the daily offerings*. These ceremonies occupy a few minutes, or half an hour, at the pleasure of the worshipper. Many persons living in Bengal employ bramhūns at Benares to perform the worship of the lingū in temples which they have built there.

Every year, in the month Phalagoonū, the Hindoos make the image of Shivū, and worship it for one day, throwing

* The shastrūs prohibit the bramhūns from receiving the offerings presented to Shivū: the reason I have not discovered. The bramhūns, however, contrive to explain the words of the shastrū in such a manner, as to secure the greater part of the things presented to this idol.

the image the next day into the water. This worship is performed in the night, and is accompanied with singing, dancing, music, feasting, &c. The image worshipped is either that of Shivũ with five faces, or that with one face. In the month Maghũ also a festival in honour of Shivũ is held for one day, when the image of this god sitting on a bull, with Parvũtēē on his knee, is worshipped. This form of Shivũ is called Hũrũ-Gourēēy.

In the month Choitrũ an abominable festival in honour of this god is celebrated; when many Hindoos, assuming the name of sũnyasēēs, inflict on themselves the greatest cruelties. Some of the chief sũnyasēēs purify themselves for a month previously to these ceremonies, by going to some celebrated temple or image of Shivũ, and there eating only once a day, abstaining from certain gratifications, repeating the name of Shivũ, dancing before his image, &c. Other sũnyasēēs perform these preparatory ceremonies for fifteen, and others for only ten days; during which time parties of men and boys dance in the streets, having their bodies covered with ashes, &c. and a long piece of false hair mixed with mud wrapped round the head like a turban. A large drum accompanies each party, making a horrid din.

On the first day of the festival, these sũnyasēēs cast themselves from a bamboo stage with three resting places, the highest about twenty feet from the ground. From this height these persons cast themselves on iron spikes stuck in bags of straw. These spikes are laid in a reclining posture, and when the person falls they almost constantly fall down instead of entering his body. There are instances

y Hũrũ is the name of Shivũ, and Gourēē that of Doorga.

however of persons being killed, and others wounded; but they are very rare. A few years ago, a person at Kidūr-poorū, near Calcutta, cast himself on a knife used in cleaning fish, which entered his side, and was the cause of his death. He threw himself from the stage twice on the same day; the second time, (which was fatal,) to gratify a prostitute with whom he lived.—In some villages, several of these stages are erected, and as many as two or three hundred people cast themselves on these spikes in one day, in the presence of great crowds of people. The worshippers of Shivū make a great boast of the power of their god in preserving his followers in circumstances of such danger.

The next day is spent in idleness, the sūnyasēēs lying about Shivū's temple, and wandering about like persons half drunk, or jaded with revelling. On the following day, a large fire is kindled opposite Shivū's temple; and when the burnt wood has been formed into a great heap, one of the chief sūnyasēēs, with a bunch of canes in his hand, flattens the heap a little, and walks over it with his feet bare. After him, the other sūnyasēēs spread the fire about, walk across it, dance upon it, and then cast the embers into the air and at each other.

The next morning early the work of piercing the tongues and sides commences. In the year 1806 I went to Kalēē-ghatū, in company with two or three friends, to witness these practices; at which place we arrived about five o'clock in the morning. We overtook numerous companies who were proceeding thither, having with them drums and other instruments of music; also spits, canes, and different articles to pierce their tongues and sides. Some with tinkling rings on their ancles were dancing and exhibiting indecent gestures as they passed along, while others rent the air with the

sounds of their filthy songs. As we entered the village where the temple of this great goddess is situated, the crowds were so great that we could with difficulty get our vehicles along, and at last were completely blocked up. We then alighted, and went amongst the crowd. But who can describe a scene like this?—Here, men of all ages, who intended to have their tongues pierced, or their sides bored, were buying garlands of flowers to hang round their necks, or tie round their heads;—there, others were carrying their offerings to the goddess:—above the heads of the crowd were seen nothing but the feathers belonging to the great drums, and the instruments of torture which each victim was carrying in his hand. These wretched slaves of superstition were distinguished from others by the quantity of oil rubbed on their bodies, and by streaks and dots of mud all over them: some of the chief men belonging to each company were covered with ashes, or dressed in a most fantastic manner, like the fool among mountebanks. For the sake of low sport, some were dressed as English women; and others had on a hat, to excite the crowd to laugh at Europeans. As soon as we could force our way, we proceeded to the temple of Kalēē, where the crowd, inflamed to madness, almost trampled upon one another, to obtain a sight of the idol. We went up to the door-way, when a bramhūn, who was one of the owners of the idol, addressed one of my companions in broken English: “Money—money—for black mother.” My friend, not much liking the looks of his black mother, declared he should give her nothing. From this spot we went into the temple-yard, where two or three blacksmiths had begun the work of piercing the tongues and boring the sides of these infatuated disciples of Shivū. The first man seemed reluctant to hold out his tongue; but the blacksmith, rubbing it with something like flour, and having a piece of cloth betwixt his fingers, laid firm hold,

dragged it out, and, placing his lancet under it in the middle, pierced it through, and let the fellow go. The next person, whose tongue we saw cut, directed the blacksmith to cut it on a contrary side, as it had been already cut twice. This man seemed to go through the business of having his tongue slit with perfect *sang froid*. The company of natives were entirely unmoved, and the blacksmith, pocketing the trifling fee given by each for whom he did this favour, laughed at the sport. I could not help asking, whether they were not punishing these men for lying.—After seeing the operation performed on one or two more, we went to another group, where they were boring the sides. The first we saw undergoing this operation was a boy, who might be twelve or thirteen years old, and who had been brought thither by his elder brother to submit to this cruelty. A thread rubbed with clarified butter was drawn through the skin on each side, with a kind of lancet having an eye like a needle. He did not flinch, but hung by his hands over the shoulders of his brother. I asked a man who had just had his sides bored, why he did this? He said, he had made a vow to Kalēē at a time of dangerous illness, and was now performing this vow: a bye-stander added, it was an act of holiness, or merit. Passing from this group, we saw a man dancing backwards and forwards with two canes run through his sides as thick as a man's little finger. In returning to Calcutta we saw many with things of different thicknesses thrust through their sides and tongues, and several with the pointed handles of iron shovels, containing fire, sticking in their sides. Into this fire every now and then they threw Indian pitch, which for the moment blazed very high. I saw one man whose singular mode of self-torture struck me much: his breast, arms, and other parts of his body, were entirely covered with pins, as thick as nails or packing nee-

dles. This is called *vanū-phōra*^z. The person had made a vow to Shivū thus to pierce his body, praying the god to remove some evil from him.

Some *sūnyasēēs* at this festival put swords through the holes in their tongues; others spears; others thick pieces of round iron, which they call arrows. Many, as a bravado, put other things through their tongues, as living snakes, bamboos, ramrods, &c. Others, to excite the attention of the crowd still more, procure images of houses, gods, temples, &c. and placing them on a single bamboo, hold them up in their hands, and put the bamboo through their tongues. In 1805, at Calcutta, a few base fellows made a bamboo stage, placed a prostitute upon it, and carried her through the streets, her paramour accompanying them, having one of her ankle ornaments in the slit of his tongue. Another year a man put his finger through the tongue of another person, and they went along dancing and making indecent gestures together. Others put bamboos, ropes, canes, the stalk of a climbing plant, the long tube of the hooka, &c. through their sides, and rubbing these things with oil, while two persons go before and two behind to hold the ends of the things which have been passed through the sides, they dance backwards and forwards, making indecent gestures. These people pass through the streets with these marks of self-torture upon them, followed by crowds of idle people. They are paid by the towns or villages where these acts are performed, and a levy is made on the inhabitants to defray the expense. On the evening of this day some *sūnyasēēs* pierce the skin of their foreheads, and place a rod of iron in it as a socket, and on this rod fasten a lamp, which is kept burning all night. The persons bearing these lamps sit all night in or near Shivū's temple,

^z Piercing with arrows.

occasionally calling upon this god by different names. On the same evening, different parties of sūnyasēēs hold conversations respecting Shivū in verse.

On the following day, in the afternoon, the ceremony called Chūrūkū, or the swinging by hooks fastened in the back, is performed. The posts are erected in some open place in the town or suburbs: they are generally fifteen, twenty, or twenty-five cubits high. In some places a kind of worship is paid at the foot of the tree to Shivū, when two pigeons are let loose, or slain. In other parts, i. e. in the neighbourhood of Calcutta, the worship of Shivū is performed at his temple; after which the crowd proceed to the swinging posts, and commence the horrid work of torture. The man who is to swing prostrates himself before the tree, and a person, with his dusty fingers, makes a mark where the hooks are to be put. Another person immediately gives him a smart slap on the back, and pinches up the skin hard with his thumb and fingers; while another thrusts the hook through, taking hold of about an inch of the skin; the other hook is then in like manner put through the skin of the other side of the back, and the man gets up on his feet. As he is rising, some water is thrown in his face. He then mounts on a man's back, or is elevated in some other way; and the strings which are attached to the hooks in his back are tied to the rope at one end of the horizontal bamboo, and the rope at the other end is held by several men, who, drawing it down, raise up the end on which the man swings, and by their running round with the rope the machine is turned. In swinging, the man describes a circle of about thirty feet diameter. Some swing only a few minutes, others half an hour or more: I have heard of men who continued swinging for hours. In the southern parts of Bengal a piece of cloth is wrapt round the body under-

neath the hooks, lest the flesh should tear, and the wretch fall, and be dashed to pieces; but the whole weight of the body rests on the hooks. Some of these persons take the wooden pipe, and smook while swinging, as though insensible of the least pain. Others take up fruit in their hands, and either eat it or throw it among the crowd. I have heard of a person's having a monkey's collar run into his hinder parts^a, in which state the man and the monkey whirled round together. On one occasion, in the north of Bengal, a man took a large piece of wood in his mouth, and swung for a considerable time without any cloth round his body to preserve him, should the flesh of his back tear. On some occasions these *sūnyasēēs* have hooks run through their thighs as well as backs. About the year 1800 five *women* swung in this manner, with hooks through their backs and thighs, at Kidūrpoorū near Calcutta. It is not very uncommon for the flesh to tear, and the person to fall: instances are related of such persons perishing on the spot. A few years ago a man fell from the post at Kidūrpoorū, while whirling round with great rapidity; and, falling on a poor woman who was selling parched rice, killed her on the spot: the man died the next day. At a village near Būjbūj, some years since, the swing fell, and broke a man's leg. The man who was upon it, as soon as he was loosed, ran to another tree, was drawn up, and whirled round again, as though nothing had happened. I have heard of one man's swinging three times in one day on different trees; and a *bramhūn* assured me, that he had seen four men swing on one tree; while swinging, this tree was carried round the field by the crowd.

On the day of swinging, in some places, a *sūnyasēē* is

^a At Kidūrpoorū.

laid before the temple of Shivũ as dead, and is afterwards carried to the place where they burn the dead. Here they read many incantations and perform certain ceremonies, after which the (supposed) dead sũnyasēē arises, when they dance around him, proclaiming the name of Shivũ.

The next morning the sũnyasēēs go to Shivũ's temple, and perform worship to him, when they take off the poita which they had worn during the festival. On this day, they beg, or take from their houses, a quantity of rice, and other things, which they make into a kind of frumenty, in the place where they burn the dead. These things they offer, with some burnt fish, to departed ghosts.

Each day of the festival the sũnyasēēs worship the sun, pouring water, flowers, &c. on a clay image of the alligator, repeating mũntrũs.

These horrid ceremonies are said to derive their origin from a king named Vanũ, whose history is related in the Mũhabharũtũ. This work says, that Vanũ, in the month Choitrũ, instituted these rites, and inflicted a number of the cruelties here detailed on his own body, viz. he mounted the swing, pierced his tongue and sides, danced on fire, threw himself on spikes, &c. At length he obtained an interview with Shivũ, who surrounded his palace with a wall of fire, and promised to appear whenever he should stand in need of his assistance. Those who perform these ceremonies at present, expect that Shivũ will bestow upon them some blessing either in this life or in the next.

Doorga is the wife of Shivũ. This goddess is known under other names, as Bhũgũvũtēē, Sũtēē, Parvũtēē, &c. In one age Shivũ was married to Sũtēē, the daughter of

king Dūkshū, and in another to the same goddess under the name of Parvūtēē, the daughter of the mountain Himalūyū; hence she is the mountain-goddess.

When Doorga was performing religious austerities to obtain Shivū in marriage, the latter was so moved that he appeared to her, and enquired why she was thus employed? She was ashamed to assign the reason, but her attendants replied for her. He, in jest, reproved her, observing that people performed religious austerities to obtain something valuable; in the article of marriage they desired a person of a good family, but he (Shivū) had neither father nor mother;—or a rich person, but he had not a garment to wear;—or a handsome person, but he had three eyes.

When Shivū was about to be married to Parvūtēē, her mother and the neighbours treated the god in a very scurrilous manner; the neighbours cried out, “Ah! ah! ah! This image of gold, this most beautiful damsel, the greatest beauty in the three worlds, to be given in marriage to such a fellow—an old fellow with three eyes; without teeth; clothed in a tyger’s skin; covered with ashes; incircled with snakes; wearing a necklace of human bones; with a human skull in his hand; with a filthy jūta (viz. a bunch of hair like a turban) twisted round his head; who chews intoxicating drugs; has inflamed eyes; rides naked on a bull, and wanders about like a madman, Ah! they have thrown this beautiful daughter into the river^b!”—In this

^b In allusion to the throwing of dead bodies into the river. This resembles the surprise said to have been excited by the marriage of Venus to the filthy and deformed Vulcan. Another very singular coincidence betwixt the European idolatry and that of the Hindoos is furnished by the story of Vulcan and Minerva, and that respecting Shivū and Mohinēē as given in the Markūndéyū pooranū; but which I have suppressed on account of its offensive nature.

manner the neighbours exclaimed against the marriage, till Narūdū, who had excited the disturbance, interfered, and the wedding was concluded.

A number of stories are related in some of the Hindoo books of an inferior order, respecting the quarrels of Shivū and Parvūtēē, occasioned by the revels of the former, and the jealousy of the latter. These quarrels resemble those of Jupiter and Juno. Other stories are told of Shivu's descending to the earth in the form of a mendicant, for the preservation of some one in distress; to perform religious austerities, &c.

Shivū is said, in the pooranūs, to have destroyed Kūndūrpu (Cupid), for interrupting him in his devotions, previous to his union with Doorga. We find, however, the god of love restored to existence, after a lapse of ages, under the name of Prūdyoomū, when he again obtained his wife Rūtee. After his marriage with the mountain-goddess, Shivū on a certain occasion offended his father-in-law, king Dūkshū, by refusing to bow to him as he entered the circle in which the king was sitting. To be revenged, Dūkshū refused to invite Shivū to a sacrifice which he was about to perform. Sūtēē, the king's daughter, however, was resolved to go, though uninvited and forbidden by her husband. On her arrival Dūkshū poured a torrent of abuse on Shivū, which affected Sūtēē so much that she died^c. When Shivū heard of the loss of his beloved wife, he created a monstrous giant, whom he commanded to go and destroy Dūkshū, and put an end to his sacrifice. He speedily accomplished this work, by cutting off the head of the king, and dispersing all the guests. The gods, in compassion to Dūkshū, placed on

^c In reference to this mark of strong attachment, a Hindoo widow burning with her husband on the funeral pile is called Sūtēē.

his decapitated body the head of a goat, and restored him to his family and kingdom.

This god has a thousand names, among which are the following: Shivü, or, the benefactor. Mühéshwürü, the great god^d. Eeshwürü, the glorious god. Chündrüşékürü, he whose forehead is adorned with a half-moon. Bhōōtëshü, he who is lord of the bhōōtüs^e. Mrirü, he who purifies. Mrityoonjüyü, he who conquers death. Kritti-vasa, he who wears a skin. Oogrü, the furious. Shrē-küntü, he whose throat is beautiful^f. Kūpalübhit, he whose alms' dish is a skull^g. Smürü-hürü, the destroyer of the god of love. Tripoorantükü, he who destroyed Tripoo-

^d The pündits give proofs from the shastrüs, in which Shivü is acknowledged to be the greatest of the gods, or Mūha-dévü: from mūha, great, and dévü, god.

^e Bhōōtüs are beings partly in human shape, though some of them have the faces of horses, others of camels, others of monkeys, &c. Some have the bodies of horses, and the faces of men. Some have one leg, and some two. Some have only one ear, and others only one eye. Shivü is attended by a number of these bhōōtüs, as Bacchus had a body of guards consisting of drunken satyrs, demons, nymphs, &c.

^f After Shivü, to preserve the earth from destruction, had drank the poison which arose out of the sea, when the gods churned it to obtain the water of immortality, he fell into a swoon, and appeared to be at the point of death. All the gods were exceedingly alarmed; the üsoortüs were filled with triumph, under the expectation that one of the gods (even Shivü himself) was about to expire. The gods addressed Doorga, who took Shivü in her arm, and began to repeat certain incantations to destroy the effects of the poison: Shivü revived. This was the first time incantations were used to destroy the power of poison. Though the poison did not destroy Shivü, it left a blue mark on his throat; and hence one of his names is Nēlü-küntü, the blue-throated.

^g This is Brümha's skull. Shivü in a quarrel cut off one of Brümha's five heads, and made an alms' dish of it. Brümha and other gods, in the character of mendicants, are represented with an earthen pot in the hand which contains their food. This pot is called a kümün-düloo.

rū, an ūsoorū. Gūnga-dhūrū, he who caught the goddess Gūnga in his hair^h. Vrishū-dwūjū, he whose standard is a bullⁱ. Shōōlēē, he who wields the trident^k. St'hanoo, the everlasting. Shūrūvū, he who is every thing. Girēeshū, lord of the hills, he who dwells on the hills.

The following account of the heaven of Shivū is translated from the work called Krityū-tūtwū. This heaven, which is situated on mount Koilasū, and called Shivūpoorū, is ornamented with many kinds of gems and precious things, as pearls, coral, gold, silver, &c.—Here reside gods, danūvūs^l, gūndhūrūvūs^m, ūpsūrūsⁿ, siddhūs^o, charūnūs^p, brūmhūrshēes^q, dévūrshēes^r, and mūhūrshēes^s; also other sages, as Sūnatūnū, Sūnūtkoomarū, Sūnūndū, Ūgūstyū, Ūngira, Poolūstyū, Poolūhū, Chitrū, Angirūsū, Goutūmū, Bhrigoo, Pūrashūrū, Bhūrūdwajū, Mrikūndū, Markūndéyū, Shoonūshéphū, Ūshtavūkrū, Dhomyū, Valmēēkee, Vūshisht'hū, Doorvasa, &c. These persons constantly perform the worship of Shivū and Doorga, and the ūpsūrūs are continually employed in singing, dancing, and other festivities.—The flowers of every season are always in bloom here: among which are, the yōōthēē^t, jatēē^u, mūllika^x, malūtēē^y, dorū^z, tūgūrū^a, kūrūvēērū^b, kūlharū^c, kūrnikarū^d, kēshūrū^e,

^h In Gūnga's descent from heaven, Shivū caught her in the bunch of hair tied at the back of his head.

ⁱ Shivū's conduct, on the day of his marriage with Parvūtēē, puts us in mind of Priapus. The Indian god rode through Kamū-rōōpū on a bull, naked, with the bride on his knee.

^k Here Shivū appears with Neptune's sceptre, though I cannot find that he resembles the watery god in any thing else.

^l A particular kind of giants. ^m The heavenly choiristers. ⁿ Dancers and courtezans. ^o Gods who act as servants to some of the other gods. ^q Sacred sages. ^r Divine sages. ^s Great sages. ^t *Jasminum auriculatum*. ^u *J. grandiflorum*. ^x *J. zambae*. ^y *Gætnera racemosa*. ^z Unknown. *Tabernæmontana coronaria*. ^b *Nerium odorum*. ^c *Nymphaea eyanea*. ^d *Pterospermum acerifolium*. ^e *Mimusops elengi*.

poonnagŭ^d, drona^e, gŭndhŭrajŭ^f, shéphalika^g, chŭmpŭkŭ^h, bhōōmee-chŭmpŭkŭⁱ, nagŭ-késhŭrŭ^k, moochŭkoondŭ^l, kanchŭnŭ^m, piooleeⁿ, jhintēē^o, nēēlŭ-jhintēē^p, rūktŭ-jhintēē^q, kŭdŭmbŭ^r, rūjŭnēēgŭndhŭ^s, tŭrku^t, tŭroolŭta^u, parijatŭ^x, &c. &c. Cool, odoriferous, and gentle winds always blow on these flowers, and diffuse their fragrance all over the mountain. The shade produced by the parijatŭ tree is very cooling. This mountain also produces the following trees and fruits: shala^y, talŭ^z, tŭmalŭ^a, hintalŭ^b, kŭrjōōrŭ^c, amrŭ^d, jŭmvēērŭ^e, goovakŭ^f, pŭnŭsŭ^g, shrēēphŭlŭ^h, drakshaⁱ, ingoodēē^k, vŭtŭ^l, ŭshwŭt'hŭ^m, kŭpitt'hŭⁿ, &c. A variety of birds are constantly singing here, and repeating the names of Doorga and Shivŭ, viz. the kakŭ^o, shookŭ^p, paravŭtŭ^q, tittiree^r, chatŭkŭ^s, chasŭ^t, bhasŭ^u, kōkilŭ^x, sarasŭ^y, datyōōhŭ^z, chŭkrŭvakŭ^a, &c. &c. The waters of the heavenly Ganges (Mŭndakinēē) glide along in purling streams. The six seasons are uninterruptedly enjoyed on this mountain, viz. vŭsŭntu (spring), grēēshmŭ (summer), vŭrsha (rainy), shŭrŭt (sultry), shishirŭ (dewy), and shēētŭ (cold). On a golden throne, adorned with jewels, sit Shivŭ and Doorga, engaged in conversation.

- ^d Rottlera tinctoria. ^e Phlomis zeylanica. ^f Gardenia florida.
^g Nyctanthes arbor tristis. ^h Michelia champaca. ⁱ Kempferia rotunda.
^k Mesua ferrea. ^l Pterospermum suberifolia. ^m Bauhinia (several species).
ⁿ Linum trigynum. ^o Barleria cristata. ^p Barleria cœrulea.
^q Barleria ciliata. ^r Nauclea orientalis. ^s The tuberose.
^t Æschynomenesesban. ^u Ipomea quamoclit. ^x Phœnix paludosa.
^y Phœnix sylvestris. ^z Erythrina fulgens. ^a Shorea robusta.
^b Borassus flabelliformis. ^c Diospyrus cordifolia. ^d Mangifera Indica.
^e The citron or lime tree. ^f Areca catechu. ^g Artocarpus integrifolia.
^h Ægle marmelos. ⁱ The grape vine. ^k Unknown. ^l Ficus Indica.
^m Ficus religiosa. ⁿ Feronia elephantium. ^o The crow. ^p The parrot.
^q The pigeon. ^r The partridge. ^s The sparrow. ^t Coracias Indica.
^u Unknown. ^x The Indian cuckow. ^y The Siberian crane. ^z The gallinule. ^a Anas casarca.

The Shrēe-bhagvūtū contains another description of the heaven of Shivū:—Sixteen thousand miles from the earth, on mount Koilasū^t, resides this god, in a palace of gold, adorned with jewels of all kinds. This palace is surrounded with forests, gardens, canals, trees laden with all kinds of fruit, flowers of every fragrance. The kŭlpū tree also grows here, from which a person may obtain every kind of food and all other things he may desire. In the centre of a roodrakshū^u forest, under a tree, Shivū frequently sits with his wife Parvūtēē. The fragrance of the parijatū flowers extends 200 miles in all directions; and all the seasons are here enjoyed at the same time. The winds blow softly, filled with the most refreshing odours. At the extremities of this heaven southwards and northwards Shivū has fixed two gates, one of which is kept by Nŭndēē, the other by Mŭha-kalū. A number of gods and other celestial beings constantly reside here, among whom are Kartikéyū and Gŭnēshū, the sons of Shivū; also the female servants of Doorga, Jŭya, and Vijŭyar, eight nayikas, and sixty-four yoginēēs, with bhōōtŭs, pishachŭs, Shivū's bull, and those disciples of Shivū (shaktŭs) who have obtained beatitude. The time is spent here in the festivities and abominations of the other heavens.

^t Sonini, during his travels in Greece and Turkey, made a journey into ancient Macedonia, and paid a visit to mount Olympus, the abode of the gods. It was the middle of July when this excursion was made, and although the heat was extreme towards the base of the mountain, as well as in the plain, vast masses of snow rendered the summit inaccessible. "It is not astonishing," says Sonini, "that the Greeks have placed the abode of the gods on an eminence which mortals cannot reach." The monks of the convent, "who have succeeded them in this great elevation," confirmed what has been sometimes disputed, the perpetual permanence of ice and snow on the top of the mountain. With the exception of chamois and a few bears, there are hardly any quadrupeds to be seen beyond the half of the height of Olympus. Birds also scarcely pass this limit.

^u Eleocarpus ganitrus.

SECTION III.—*Brümha*.

As has been already mentioned, Brümha, Vishnoo, and Shivü derived their existence from the one Brümhü. The Hindoo pündits do not admit these to be creatures, but contend that they are emanations from, or parts of, the one Brümhü.

Brümha first produced the waters, then the earth; next, from his own mind, he caused a number of sages and four females to be born: among the sages was Küşhyüpü, the father of the gods, giants, and men. From Ūditee were born the gods; from Ditee the giants; from Kūdroo the hydras; and from Vinüta, Gūroorü and Ūroonü. After creating these sages, who were of course bramhüns, Brümha caused a kshütriyü to spring from his arms, a voishyü from his thighs, and a shōōdrü from his feet. In this order, according to the pooranüs, the whole creation arose. The Hindoo shastrüs, however, contain a variety of different accounts on the subject of creation. I have thought it necessary to give this brief statement, as it seems connected with the history of this god.

Brümha is represented as a man with four faces, of a gold colour; dressed in white garments; riding on a goose. In one hand he holds a stick, and in the other a kümündüloo, or alms' dish. He is called the grandfather (pitamühü) of gods and men^b. He is not much regarded in the reigning superstition; nor does any one adopt him as his guardian deity.

^b Jupiter was called the father and king of gods and men.

The bramhũns, in their morning and evening worship, repeat an incantation, containing a description of the image of Brũmha; at noon they perform an act of worship in honour of this god, presenting to him sometimes a single flower: at the time of a burnt offering clarified butter is presented to Brũmha. In the month Maghũ, at the full moon, an earthen image of this god is worshipped, with that of Shivũ on his right hand, and that of Vishnoo on his left. This festival lasts only one day, and the three gods are, the next day, thrown into the river. This worship is accompanied with songs, dances, music, &c. as at all other festivals; but the worship of Brũmha is most frequently celebrated by a number of young men of the baser sort, who defray the expences by a subscription.—Bloody sacrifices are never offered to Brũmha.

Brũmha, notwithstanding the venerable name of grandfather, seems to be as lewd as any of the gods. At the time that intoxicating spirits were first made, all the gods, giants, gundhũrvũs, yũkshũs, kinnũrũs, &c. were accustomed to drink spirits, and no blame was then attached to drunkenness: but one day Brũmha, in a state of intoxication, made an attempt on the virtue of his own daughter, by which he incurred the wrath of the gods. Some time afterwards, Brũmha boasted in company, that he was as great a god as Shivũ. Hearing what Brũmha had been saying, the latter, inflamed with anger, was about to cut off one of Brũmha's heads, but was prevented by the intercessions of the assembled gods. Brũmha complained to Doorga, who appeased him by saying, that Shivũ did not attempt to cut off his head because he aspired to be greater than he, but because he (Brũmha) had been guilty of a great crime in endeavouring to seduce his daughter. Brũmha was satisfied with this answer, but pronounced a curse on what-

ever god, gūndhurvū, or ūpsūra should hereafter drink spirits.

The above is the substance of the story as related in the Mūhabharūtū. The Kashēē-khūndū of the Skūnda pooranū says, that Brūmha lost one of his heads in the following manner:—this god was one day asked by certain sages, in the presence of Krūtoo, a form of Vishnoo, who was greatest, Brūmha, Vishnoo, or Shivū? Brūmha affirmed that he was entitled to this distinction. Krūtoo, as a form of Vishnoo, insisted that the superiority belonged to himself. An appeal was made to the védus; but those books declared in favour of Shivū. On hearing this verdict, Brūmha was filled with rage, and made many insulting remarks upon Shivū; who, assuming the terrific form of Kalu-Bhoirūvū, appeared before Brūmha and Krūtoo, and, receiving farther insults from Brūmha, with his nails tore off one of Brūmha's five heads. Brūmha was now thoroughly humbled, and with joined hands acknowledged that he was inferior to Shivū. Thus this quarrel betwixt the three gods was adjusted; and Shivū, the naked mendicant, was acknowledged as Mūha-dévū, the great god.

Brūmha is also charged with stealing several calves from the herd which Krishnū was feeding,

This god, assuming the appearance of a religious mendicant, is said to have appeared many times on earth for different purposes. Stories to this effect are to be found in several of the pooranūs.

The Mūhabharūtū contains the following description of the heaven of Brūmha:—this heaven is 800 miles long, 400 broad, and 40 high. Narūdū, when attempting to describe

this heaven, declared himself utterly incompetent to the task; that he could not do it in two hundred years; that it contained in a superior degree all that was in the other heavens; and that whatever existed in the creation of Brumha on earth, from the smallest insect to the largest animal, was to be found here.

A scene in the heaven of Brümha:—Vrihüspütee, the spiritual guide of the gods, on a particular occasion went to the palace of his elder brother Ootüt'hyü, and became enamoured of his pregnant wife. The child in the womb reproved him. Vrihüspütee cursed the child; on which account it was born blind, and called Dēērhü-tüma^c. When grown up, Dēērhü-tüma followed the steps of his uncle, and from his criminal amours Goutümü and other Hindoo saints were born. Dēērhü-tüma was delivered from the curse of Vrihüspütee by Yoodhist'hirü.

This god has many names, among which are the following: Brümha, or, he who multiplies [mankind]. Atmübhōō, the self-existent. Pürümést'hēē, the chief sacrificer^d. Pitamühü, the grandfather. Hirünyü-gürbhü, he who is pregnant with gold. Lokéshü, the god of mankind, the creator. Chütoor-anүнү, the four-faced. Dhata, the creator. Ubjü-yonee, he who is born from the water-lily. Droohinü, he who subdues the giants. Prüjapütee, the lord of all creatures. Savitrēē-pütee, the husband of Savitrēē.

^c From dēērhü, long; tüma, darkness.

^d That is, as the first bramhün he performed all the great sacrifices of the Hindoo law. To every sacrifice a bramhün is necessary.

SECTION IV.—*Indrū*.

Indrū is called the king of heaven, and his reign is said to continue 100 years of the gods; after which another person, from among the gods, the giants, or men, by his own merit, raises himself to this eminence. The sacrifice of a horse^e one hundred times raises a person to the rank of Indrū.

The Shrēe-bhagvūtū gives the following list of the persons who have been or will be raised to the rank of king of the gods during the present kŭlpū: Hūree, Rochūnū, Sūtyū-jit, Trishikhū, Vibhoo, Mūntrū-droomū, and Poorūndūrū, the present Indrū. To him will succeed Būlee, Shrootū, Shūmbhoo, Voidhritū, Gūndhū-dhama, Divūspūtee, and Shoochee.

Indrū is represented as a white man, sitting on an elephant called Oiravūtū, with a thunderbolt in his right hand, and a bow in his left. He has 1000 eyes.

The worship of Indrū is celebrated annually, in the day time, on the 14th of the lunar month Bhadrū. The usual ceremonies of worship are accompanied with singing, music, dancing, &c. In Bengal the greater number of those who keep this festival are women; in whose names the ceremonies are performed by officiating bramhūns. It lasts one day, after which the image is thrown into the river. This festival, which is accompanied by the greatest festivities, is celebrated all over Bengal; each one repeating it

^e The horse, on account of his usefulness in war, was sacrificed to Mars,

annually during fourteen years. On the day of worship, a few blades of *dōrva* grass are tied round the right arm of a man, and the left of a woman. Some persons wear this string, which contains fourteen knots, for a month after the festival is over. Fourteen kinds of fruits, fourteen cakes, &c. must be presented to the image. This worship is performed for the purpose of procuring riches, or a house, or a son, or pleasure, or a residence after death in *Indrū's* heaven.

Indrū is supposed to preside over the elements, so that in times of drought prayers are addressed to him as the giver of rain.

He is also one of the ten guardian deities of the earth, and is said to preside in the east. To render the worship of any other god acceptable, it is necessary that the worship of these deities be previously performed, viz. of *Indrū*, *Ūgnee*, *Yūmū*, *Noiritū*, *Vūroonū*, *Pūvūnū*, *Eeshū*, *Ūnūntū*, *Koovérū*, and *Brūmha*; also that of 'the five deities,' viz. *Sōōryū*, *Gūnēshū*, *Shivū*, *Doorga*, and *Vishnoo*; and of the nine planets, viz. *Rūvee*, *Somū*, *Mūngūlū*, *Boodhū*, *Vrihūspūtee*, *Shookrū*, *Shūnee*, *Rahoo*, and *Kétoo*. In consequence of this rule, a few ceremonies of worship are performed to *Indrū* at the commencement of every festival.

The *pooranūs* and other writings contain a number of stories respecting this king of the gods, who is represented as particularly jealous lest any persons should, by the performance of sacred austerities, outdo him in religious merit, and thus obtain his kingdom. To prevent these devotees from succeeding in their object, he generally sends a captivating female from his own residence to draw away their minds, and thus throw them down from the ladder of reli-

gious merit, and send them back again to a life of gratification among the delusive forms of earth. But that which entails the greatest infamy on the character of this god is, his seducing the wife of his spiritual guide Goutūmū. This story is related in the Ramayūnū as follows: 'After receiving the highest honours from Prūmūtēe, the two descendants of Rūghoo, having passed the night there, went towards Mit'hila. When the sages beheld at a distance the beautiful city of Jūnūkū, they joyfully exclaimed, 'Excellent! excellent!' Raghūva, seeing a hermitage in a grove of Mit'hila, asked the chief of sages, 'What solitary wilderness is this, O divine one? I desire to hear whose hermitage this is, beautiful, of impenetrable shade, and inhabited by sages.' Vishwamitrū, hearing these words, in pleasing accents thus answered the lotus-eyed Ramū: 'Attend, I will inform thee whose is this hermitage, and in what manner it became solitary, cursed by the great one in his wrath. This was the sacred hermitage of the great Goutūmū, adorned with trees, flowers, and fruits. For many thousand years, O son of Rūghoo, did the sage remain here with Ūhūlya, performing sacred austerities. One day, O Ramū, the sage being gone far distant, the king of heaven, acquainted with the opportunity, and sick with impure desire, assuming the habit of a sage^f, thus addressed Ūhūlya, 'The menstrual season deserves regard^g, O thou

^f That is, the habit of Goutūmū. This resembles Jupiter's seducing Alcmena, the wife of Amphytrion, in her husband's absence, in the likeness of Amphytrion.

^g 'According to the shastrūs, sixteen days from the appearance of the menses is reckoned the menstrual season. All connubial intercourse is forbidden during the first three of these days. The guilt incurred by a violation of this rule, on the first day is equal to that of a criminal connection with a female chūndalū, on the second day equal to the same act with a washerwoman, and on the third to the same act with a female shōōdrū.'

This depraved woman, O afflicter of enemies, knowing Shūkrū^d in the disguise of a sage, through wantonness consented, he being king of the gods. The chief of the gods having perpetrated his crime, she thus addressed him: 'O chief of gods, thou hast accomplished thy design, speedily depart unobserved. O sovereign of the gods, effectually preserve thyself and me from Goutūmū.' Indrū smiling replied to Ūhūlya, 'O beautiful one, I am fully pleased; I will depart; forgive my transgression.' After this, he, O Ramū, with much caution left the hermitage, dreading the wrath of Goutūmū. At that instant he saw Goutūmū enter, resplendent with energy, and, through the power of sacred austerities, invincible even to the gods^e; wet with the waters of the sacred tēēr'thū^f, as the fire moistened with clarified butter^g, he saw him coming to the hermitage, laden with sacrificial wood, and the sacred kooshū. Perceiving him, Shūkrū was overwhelmed with sadness. The sage clothed in virtue, beholding the profligate lord of the gods in the disguise of a sage, in dreadful anger thus addressed him: 'O profligate wretch, assuming my form thou hast perpetrated this crime: therefore become an eunuch.' At the word of the magnanimous and angry Goutūmū, the thousand-eyed god instantly became an eunuch. Deprived of manly energy, and rendered an eunuch by the anger of the devout sage, he, full of agonizing pain, was overcome with sorrow^h.

^d A name of Indrū, signifying strength.

^e The Hindoos believe that the merit of works is such as to be sufficient to raise a person higher than the gods themselves.

^f Tēert'hūs are certain places esteemed peculiarly sacred by the Hindoos. Bathing in these places is reckoned highly meritorious.

^g That is, the fire of the burnt offering.

^h Other accounts say, that Goutūmū imprinted a thousand female marks upon him as proofs of his crime, and that Indrū was so ashamed, that he petitioned Goutūmū to deliver him from his disgrace. The sage, therefore,

The great sage, having cursed him, pronounced a curse upon his own wife : ' Innumerable series of year, O sinful wretch, of depraved heart, thou, enduring excessive pain, abandoned, lying constantly in ashes, invisible to all creatures, shalt remain in this forest. When Ramū, the son of Dūshūrut'hū, shall enter this dreadful forest, thou, beholding him, shalt be cleansed from thy sin. Having, O stupid wretch, entertained him without selfish views, thou, filled with joy, shalt again approach me without fear.' Having thus addressed this wicked woman, the illustrious Goutūmū, the great ascetic, abandoned this hermitage, and performed austerities on the pleasant top of Himūvūt, frequented by the siddhūs and charūnūs^c.

Indrū was also guilty of stealing a horse consecrated by king Sūgūrū, who was about to perform, for the hundredth time, the sacrifice of this animal.

Indrū, though king of the gods, has been frequently overcome in war: Méghū-nadū^d, the son of Ravūnū, the giant, once overcame him, and tied him to the feet of his horse. On condition of releasing the king of the gods, Brūmha conferred on Méghū-nadū the name Indrū-jit, that is, the conqueror of Indrū. He was called Méghū-nadū because he fought behind a cloud, (méghū;) and this enabled him to overcome Indrū, who, in the engagement, was unable to see him, though he had a thousand eyes.

Kūshyūpū, the sage, once performed a great sacrifice, to changed these marks into eyes, and hence Indrū became the thousand-eyed god.

^c Carey and Marshman's Translation of the Ramayūnū, vol. i. page 433.

^d This word signifies thunder.

which all the gods were invited. Indrŭ, on his way to the feast, saw 60,000 dwarf bramhŭns trying in vain to cross a cow's footstep which was filled with water, and had the misfortune to laugh at these pigmies; at which they were so incensed, that they resolved to make a new Indrŭ, who should conquer him, and take away his kingdom. Indrŭ was so frightened at these 60,000 pigmy bramhŭns, who could not get over a cow's footstep, that he entreated Brŭmha to interfere; who saved him from their wrath, and continued him on his throne.

Description of Umŭravŭtĕe, the residence of Indrŭ, from the Mŭhabharŭtŭ:—This heaven was made by Vishwŭ-kŭrma, the architect of the gods. It is 800 miles in circumference, and 40 miles high; its pillars are composed of diamonds; all its elevated seats, beds, &c. are of gold; its palaces are also of gold. It is so ornamented with all kinds of precious stones, jasper, chrysolite, sapphire, emeralds, &c. &c. that it exceeds in splendour the brightness of twelve suns united. It is surrounded with gardens and forests, containing among other trees the parijatŭ, the fragrance of the flowers of which extends 800 miles, that is, fills the whole heaven^c. In the pleasure grounds are pools of water, warm in winter and cold in summer, abounding with fish, water-fowl, water-lilies, &c. the landing places of which are of gold. All kinds of trees and flowering shrubs abound in these gardens. The winds are most refreshing, never boisterous; and the heat of the sun is never oppressive. Gods, sages, ŭpsŭras, kinnŭrŭs, siddhŭs, saddhyŭs, dĕvŭrshees, brŭmhŭrshees, rajŭrshees, Vrihŭspŭtee, Shookrŭ, Shŭnee, Boodhŭ, the winds, clouds, Oiravŭtŭ, (Indrŭ's elephant,) and other celestial beings, dwell in this heaven. The inhabitants are con-

^c It is a curious fact, that though this flower is so celebrated in the pooranŭs for its fragrance, it has no scent at all.

tinually entertained with songs, dances, music, and every species of mirth. Neither sickness, sorrow, nor sudden death, are found in these regions, nor are its inhabitants affected with hunger or thirst.—When the god Narūdū was sitting in an assembly of princes at king Yoodhist'hirū's, the latter asked him whether he had ever seen so grand a scene before. Narūdū, after some hesitation, declared he had beheld a scene far more splendid in Indrū's heaven, of which he then gave the above account; but confessed that the place exceeded all his powers of description.

A scene in Indrū's heaven:—On a certain occasion an assembly of the gods was held in this place, at which, beside the gods, Narūdū and the rishees, the gūnūs, dūkshūs, gundhūrvūs, &c. were present. While the courtezans were dancing, and the kinnūrūs singing, the whole assembly was filled with the highest pleasure. To crown their joys, the gods caused a shower of flowers to fall on the assembly. The king of the gods, being the most distinguished personage present, first took up a flower, and, after holding it to his nose, gave it to a bramhūn. The assembled gods laughing at the brumhūn for receiving what Indrū had used, he went home in disgrace; but cursed Indrū, and doomed him to become a cat in the house of a person of the lowest cast. Suddenly, and unknown to all, he fell from heaven, and became a cat in the house of a hunter. After he had been absent eight or ten days, Shūchēē, his wife, became very anxious, and sent messengers every where to enquire for her husband. The gods also said among themselves, 'What is become of Indrū?—A total silence reigns in his palace, nor are we invited to the dance and the usual festivities! What can be the meaning of this?'—All search was in vain; and the gods assembled to enquire where he was. They found Shūchēē in a state of distraction, of whom Brumha enquired

respecting the lost god. At length Brūmha closed his eyes, and by the power of meditation discovered that Indrū, having offended a bramhūn, had become a cat. Shūchēē, full of alarm, asked Brūmha what she was to do. He told her to go to the house of the bramhūn, and obtain his favour; upon which her husband would be restored to her. Shūchēē obeyed the directions of Brūmha, and went to the house of the bramhūn; who was at length pleased with her attentions, and ordered her to descend to the earth, and go to the house of the hunter, whose wife would tell her what to do that her husband might be restored to his throne in heaven. Assuming a human form, she went to the house of the hunter, and, looking at the cat, sat weeping. The wife of the hunter, struck with the divine form of Shūchēē, enquired with surprise who she was. Shūchēē hesitated, and expressed her doubts whether the hunter's wife would believe her if she declared her real name. At length she confessed who she was, and, pointing to the cat, declared that that was her husband, Indrū, the king of heaven. The hunter's wife, petrified with astonishment, stood speechless. Shūchēē, after some farther discourse, said, she had been informed that she (the hunter's wife) alone could assist her in obtaining the deliverance of her husband. After some moments of reflection, this woman directed Shūchēē to perform the Kalika-vrūtū. She obeyed; and poor Indrū, quitting the form of the cat, ascended to heaven, and resumed his place among the gods. No doubt he took care in future not to offend a bramhūn.

Another scene in the heaven of Indrū, from the Shrēē-bhagvūtū.—On a certain occasion, the heavenly courtezans and others were dancing before the gods, when Indrū was so charmed with the dancing and the person of Oorvūshēē, one of the courtezans, that he did not perceive when his

spiritual guide Vrihūspūtee entered the assembly, and neglected to pay him the usual honours. Vrihūspūtee was so incensed at this, that he arose and left the assembly. The gods, perceiving the cause, in the utmost consternation^f went to Indrū, and made him acquainted with what had passed. The latter intreated the gods to join him in seeking for the enraged Vrihūspūtee; but the spiritual guide had, by the power of yogū, rendered himself invisible. At last they found the angry gooroo in his own house; and the gods, joining their petitions to those of Indrū, entreated that the offence might be forgiven. Vrihūspūtee declared that he had for ever rejected Indrū, and that his resolution would not be changed. Indrū, offended that for so small an offence he should be so harshly treated, declared that he would make no farther concessions, but seek another religious guide. The gods approved of his resolution, and advised him to choose Vishwū-rōōpū, a giant with three heads. In process of time, at the suggestion of his mother, Vishwū-rōōpū began a sacrifice to procure the increase of the power of the giants, the natural enemies of the gods. Indrū heard of this, and, hurling his thunders on the head of the faithless priest, destroyed him in an instant. The father of Vishwū-rōōpū heard of his son's death, and, by the merit of a sacrifice, gave birth to a giant, at the sight of whom Indrū fled to Brumha; who informed the king of the gods that this giant could not be destroyed by all his thunders, unless he could persuade Dūdhēēchee, a sage, to renounce life, and give him one of his bones. The sage consented, and by the power of yogū renounced life; when Vishwū-kūrma made this bone into a thunder-bolt, and the giant was destroyed. But immediately on his death, a terrific mon-

^f A Hindoo considers the anger of his spiritual guide as the greatest possible misfortune.

ster arose from the body, to punish Indrŭ for his bramhŭnicide. Wherever the king of the gods fled, this monster followed him with his mouth open, ready to swallow him up, till Indrŭ took refuge in a place where the monster could not approach him; however he sat down, and watched the trembling culprit. After some time the gods began to be alarmed: there was no king in heaven, and every thing was falling into complete disorder. After consultation, they raised to the throne of heaven, in his bodily state, Nŭhooshŭ, who had performed the sacrifice of a horse one hundred times. When Nŭhooshŭ enquired for Shŭchĕĕ, the queen of heaven, he found she was in the parijatŭ forest. He sent for her; but she declared she would not come, as he had a human and not a divine body. The messengers remonstrated with her, but she fled to Brŭmbha; who advised her to send word to the new Indrŭ, that she would live with him, if he would come and fetch her with an equipage superior to whatever had been seen before in heaven. This message was conveyed to the new Indrŭ; who received it with much joy, but took several days to consider in what way he should go to fetch home the queen. At last, he resolved to be carried to her in the arms of some of the principal sages. As the procession was moving along, the king, in his excessive anxiety to arrive at the parijatŭ forest, kicked the sacred lock of hair on the head of Ūgŭstyŭ; who became filled with rage, and, pronouncing a dreadful curse on the new Indrŭ, threw him down, and he fell, in the form of a snake, upon a mountain on the earth.—Vishnoo, perceiving that one Indrŭ was kept a prisoner, and that another had been cursed and sent down to the earth, resolved to find a remedy for this evil, and, cursing the monster who had imprisoned the former king of the gods, restored him to his throne and kingdom.

Another scene in Indrū's heaven, from the Mūhabharātū.—Narūdū one day called at Krishnū's, having with him a parijatū flower from the heaven of Indrū. The fragrance of this flower filled the whole place with its odours. Narūdū first called on Rookminēē, one of Krishnū's wives, and offered the flower to her. She recommended him to give it to Krishnū, that he might dispose of it as he chose. He next went to Krishnū, who received him with great respect: 'Well, Narūdū, you are come after a long absence: what flower is that?' 'Can't you tell by its fragrance?' said Narūdū, 'it is the parijatū: I brought it from Indrū's garden, and I now present it to you.' Krishnū received it with pleasure, and, after some further conversation, Narūdū retired into another part of the house and watched Krishnū, to see to which of his wives he would give this flower; that he might excite a quarrel in Krishnū's family, and ultimately a war betwixt Krishnū and Indrū. Krishnū, after Narūdū had retired, went to Rookminēē, and gave the flower to her, warning her to keep it secret, lest Sūtyū-bhama (another of Krishnū's wives) should hear of it. As soon as Narūdū saw to whom Krishnū had given the flower, he paid a visit to Sūtyū-bhama, who received him with great attention. After the first compliments were over, Narūdū fetched a deep sigh, which Sūtyū-bhama noticing, enquired the cause. He seemed to answer with reluctance, which made Sūtyū-bhama still more inquisitive. He then acknowledged that his sorrow was on her account. Her anxiety was now inflamed to the highest degree, and she begged him to tell her without delay what he meant. 'I have always considered you,' says Narūdū, 'as the most beloved wife of Krishnū; the fame of your happiness has reached heaven itself; but from what I have seen to-day, I suspect that this is all mistake.' 'Why? Why?' asked Sūtyū-bhama most anxiously. Narūdū then

unfolded to her, in the most cautious manner, the story of the flower: 'I brought from heaven,' says he, 'a parijatū flower, (a flower which is not to be obtained on earth,) and gave it to Krishnū. I made no doubt but he would present it to you—to whom else should he present it? But instead of that he went secretly to the apartments of Rookminēē, and gave the flower to her. Where then is his love to you?'—Sūtyū-bhama asked what kind of flower this was. Narūdū declared that it was not in his power to describe it, 'Do you not perceive,' said he, 'its odours?' 'I perceived,' said Sūtyū-bhama, 'the most delightful fragrance, but I thought it was from your body.' Narūdū declared that his body was offensive, and that it was the parijatū that diffused its odours all around. 'But,' says he, 'when you see Krishnū, ask him to let you look at it.' 'And do you think then,' said Sūtyū-bhama, 'that I shall speak to Krishnū, or see his face any more!'—'You are right,' said Narūdū: 'he did not even let you see so precious a jewel; but secretly gave it to another.'—The enraged Sūtyū-bhama made the most solemn protestations that she had done with Krishnū for ever. Narūdū praised her for her resolution, but hinted, that if she ever did make up the matter with Krishnū, she should insist upon his fetching one of the trees from heaven, and giving it to her. Narūdū, having thus laid the foundation of a dreadful quarrel betwixt Krishnū and his wife, and of a war with Indrū, withdrew, and Sūtyū-bhama retired to the house of anger⁵.—Some days after this, Krishnū went to see Sūtyū-bhama, but could not find her; on asking the servants, they told him that she had on some account retired to the house of anger. Not being able to discover the cause, he went to her, and made use of every soothing

⁵ A house set apart for an angry wife, where she retires till her husband reconciles himself to her.

expression; but in vain. At last he threw himself at her feet, when, after many entreaties, she consented to be reconciled, on condition that he should fetch one of the trees from heaven, and plant it in her garden. This he engaged to do, and sent Gūroorū to Indrū with his respects: but commissioned Gūroorū in case of refusal to threaten him with war; and if this did not avail, to add, that Krishnū would come and trample on the body of his queen, overturn his throne, and take the tree from him by force. Neither the entreaties nor threats of Krishnū moved Indrū; who, on the contrary, sent him a defiance. Krishnū, on the return of Gūroorū, collected his forces, and invaded heaven. Dreadful havock was made on both sides. All the heavens were in a state of frightful uproar; and the gods, full of alarm, advised Indrū to submit, as he would certainly be overcome. At length Krishnū let fly a weapon called Soodūrshūnū, which pursued the foe wherever he went. The gods again exhorted Indrū to sue for peace, to prevent his immediate destruction: he at length took this advice, and submitted to the enraged Krishnū, who carried off the tree in triumph, and appeased his jealous wife Sūtyū-bhama.

The following are some of the names of this god: Indrū, or, the glorious.—Mūrootwan, he who is surrounded by the winds.—Pakūshasūnū, he who governs the gods with justice.—Pooroohōōtū, he who is invited to a sacrifice performed by king Pooroo.—Poorūdūrū, he who destroys the dwellings of his enemies.—Jishnoo, the conqueror.—Shūkrū, he who is equal to every thing.—Shūtūmūnyoo, he who performed a hundred sacrifices.—Divūspūtee, the god of the heavens.—Gotrūbhīd, he who clipt the wings of the mountains¹.—

¹ It is said, that formerly the mountains had wings, and that they flew into all parts of the earth, and crushed to atoms towns, cities, &c.

Būjree, he who wields the thunder-bolt^k.—Vritrūha, he who destroyed the giant Vritrū.—Vrisha, the holy.—Soorū-pūtee, the king of the gods.—Būlaratee, the destroyer of Būlū, a giant.—Hūrihūyū, he who is drawn by yellow horses.—Nūmoochisoodūnū, the destroyer of Nūmoochee, a giant.—Sūnkrūdūnū, he who causes the wives of his enemies to weep.—Toorashat, he who is able to bear all things.—Méghū-vahūnū, he who rides on the clouds.—Sūhūsrakshū, he who has a thousand eyes^l.



SECT. V.—*Sōōryū*^m.

THIS god is said to be the son of Kūshyūpū, the progenitor of gods and men. He is represented as a dark-red man, with three eyes, and four arms; in two hands he holds the water-lily; with another he is bestowing a blessing, and with the other forbidding fear. He sits on a red water-lily, and rays of glory issue from his body.

The bramhūns consider *Sōōryū* as one of the greatest of the gods, because in glory he resembles the one Brūmhū, who is called téjomūyū, or the glorious. In the védūs also this god is much noticed: the celebrated incantation called the gayūtrēē, and many of the forms of meditation, prayer, and praise, used in the daily ceremonies of the bramhūns, are addressed to him. He is at present worshipped daily by the bramhūns, when flowers, water, &c. are offered, accompanied with incantations.

^k In this *Indrū* resembles Jupiter Fulminator.

^l Mr. Wilkins considers *Indrū*, with his thousand eyes, as a deification of the heavens.

^m The Sun.

On a Sunday, at the rising of the sun, in any month, but especially in the month Maghū, a number of persons, chiefly women, perform the worship of Sōōryū: I shall give an account of this worship in the words of a respected friend.—‘The sun is annually worshipped on the first Sunday in the month Maghū. The name of this worship is called Dhūrmū-bhaoo, or Sōōryū-bhaoo. The ceremonies vary in different places, but in this district the women appear to be the principal actors; though none are excluded, and even Mūsūlmans are so far Hindooized as to join in the idolatry. I saw it once thus conducted:—at the dawn of the morning a great number of offerings were carried into the open field, and placed in a row. The offerings consisted of fruits, sweetmeats, pigeons, and kids. A small pot was placed by each person’s offering, containing about a pint and a half of water. A device made of a water-plant, a species of Millingtonia, intended to represent the sun, was placed on the edge of the pot, and a small twig of the mango-tree, with a few leaves on it, put into it, as people in England keep flowers. The pot with all its appendages represented the sun perhaps as the vivifier of nature. By each offering also was placed (what shall I call it?) an incense-altar, or censer called dhoonachee. It resembled a chafing-dish, made of copper, and stood upon a pedestal about a foot long. It contained coals of fire, and a kind of incense from time to time was thrown into it, principally the pitch of the salū-tree, called dhoona. Near each offering was placed a lamp, which was kept burning all day. The women also took their stations near the offerings. At sun-rise they walked four times round the whole row of offerings, with the right hand towards them, and the smoking dhoonachees placed on their heads; after which they resumed their stations again, where they continued in an erect posture, fasting the whole day, occasionally throwing a

little incense into the dhoonachee. Towards evening the bramhūn who attended the ceremony threw the pigeons up into the air; which, being young, could not fly far, and were scrambled for and carried away by the crowd. The officiating bramhūn perforated the ears of the kids with a needle; after which they were seized by the first person who touched them. About sun-set the offerers again took up the smoking dhoonachees, and made three circuits round the rows of offerings. After this the offerings and lighted lamps were taken away by their respective owners, who threw the lamps into a pool of water.'

Women frequently make a vow to Sōōryū to worship him, on condition that he give—to one, a son; to another, riches; to another, health, &c. Some perform these ceremonies after bearing a son. This worship is sometimes attended to by one woman alone; at other times by five, six, or more in company.

Sōōryū and the other planets are frequently worshipped in order to procure health. This the Hindoos call a sacrifice to the nine planets, when flowers, rice, water, a burnt-sacrifice, &c. are offered to each of these planets separately. It is said, that two or three hundred years ago Mūyōōrū-bhūttū, a learned Hindoo, in order to obtain a cure for the leprosy, began to write a poem of one hundred Sūngskritū verses in praise of Sōōryū; and that by the time he had finished the last verse he was restored to health. These verses have been published under the title of Sōōryū-shūtūkū, the author at the close giving this account of his cure. Sometimes a sick person procures a bramhūn to rehearse for him a number of verses in praise of Sōōryū, offering at the same time to this god rice, water, and jūva^r

flowers. If the person be very ill, and a man of property, he employs two or three bramhūns, who repeat as many as a thousand verses. This ceremony must be performed standing in the sun: when a thousand verses are rehearsed, the recitation occupies more than a day. The origin of this method of obtaining relief from sickness is ascribed to Shambū, the son of Krishnū, one of the most beautiful youths in the three worlds, who was directed in a dream to repeat, twice a day, the twenty-one names of Sōōryū then revealed to him.

The persons who receive the name of Sōōryū, and adopt this god as their guardian deity, are called Sourūs: they never eat till they have worshipped the sun, and when the sun is entirely covered with clouds they fast. On a Sunday many Sourūs, as well as Hindoos belonging to other sects, perform, in a more particular manner, the worship of this idol; and on this day some of them fast.

The Ramayūnū contains the following story respecting Sōōryū, Hūnoomanū, &c. In the war betwixt Ramū and Ravūnū, an arrow discharged by Pūvūnū pierced the body of Lūkshmūnū: Ramū and all his friends were exceedingly alarmed for the life of Lūkshmūnū; the physicians tried all their efforts in vain. At last one physician declared that if four kinds of leaves could be brought from the mountain Gūndhū-madhūnū, and applied to the wound, Lūkshmūnū might probably be restored to health. The god who had given this arrow to Ravūnū had declared, that whoever was wounded with it in the night should not recover, if a cure were not obtained before day-light. It was night when the wound was inflicted, but Hūnoomanū engaged to bring the leaves before morning. To secure the fulfilment of his promise, he leaped into the air, and alighted on

the mountain ; but searched in vain for the medicinal leaves. While in his search, Ravūnū, who had heard what was going forward, sent Sōōryū to arise on the mountain at midnight. Hūnoomanū, in a rage, leaped up, and seizing Sōōryū's chariot wheels, placed the blazing god under his arm and the mountain on his head, and carried them to the camp of Ramū ; where the friends of Lūkshmūnū searched out the plants, applied the leaves, and restored him to health : after which Hūnoomanū permitted Sōōryū to depart.

Sōōryū has two wives, Sūvūrna and Chaya. The former is the daughter of Vishwūkūrma. After their marriage, Sūvūrna, unable to bear the power of his rays, made an image of herself ; and, imparting life to it, called it Chaya^o, and left it with Sōōryū. She then returned to her father's house ; but Vishwūkūrma reproved his daughter for leaving her husband, and refused her an asylum ; but promised that if she would return, he would diminish the glory of Sōōryū's rays. Sūvūrna resolved not to return, and, assuming the form of a mare, fled into the forest of Dūndūkū. Chaya and Yūmū, whom Sūvūrna had left with Sōōryū, could not agree ; and Yūmū one day beating Chaya, she cursed him, so that he ever since has had a swelled leg. Yūmū, weeping, went to his father Sōōryū, shewed him his leg, and related what had happened ; upon which Sōōryū began to suspect that this woman could not be Sūvūrna, for no mother ever cursed her own son ; and if she did, the curse could not take effect. He immediately proceeded to the house of his father-in-law, who received him with great respect, but unperceived gave him a seat consisting of different sharp weapons, by which he became

^o This word means a shadow.

divided into twelve round parts. Sōōryū was enraged, and could not be pacified till his father-in-law informed him that his daughter, unable to bear the glory of his rays, had forsaken him. On enquiring where she was gone, the father said he had sent her back to him immediately on her arrival, but that where she now was he could not say. Sōōryū, by the power of dhyānū^p, perceived that Sūvūrna had become a mare, and was gone into some forest. The story here becomes too obscene for insertion.—Sōōryū and Sūvūrna, in the forms of a horse and a mare, had two children, to whom they gave the names of Ūshwinēē and Koomarū^q. When Sōōryū returned to his palace, he asked his wife who this woman (Chaya) was. She gave him her history, and presented her to him as a wife; and from that time Chaya was acknowledged as Sōōryū's second wife.

There are no temples dedicated to Sōōryū in Bengal. The heaven of this god is called Sōōryū-lokū. A race of Hindoo kings, distinguished as the descendants of the sun, once reigned in India; of which dynasty Ikshwakoo was the first king, and Ramū the sixty-sixth.

The following are the principal names of Sōōryū: Sōōrū, or, he who dries up the earth.—Sōōryū, he who travels, he who sends men to their work.—Dwadūshatma, he who assumes twelve forms^r.—Divakūrū, the maker of the day.—Bhaskūrū, the creator of the light.—Vivūswūt, the

^p When the old Hindoo ascetics wished to ascertain a fact, they performed what is called dhyānū, viz. they shut their eyes, and began to meditate, when, it is said, the information they sought was revealed to them.

^q That is, the sons of a mare: these are now physicians to the gods.

^r Alluding to his progress through the twelve signs.

radiant.—Suptashwū, he who has seven horses in his chariot.—Vikūrttūnū, he who was made round by Vishwūkūrma in his lathe.—Ūrkū, the maker of heat.—Mihirū, he who wets the earth^s.—Pōōshūnū, he who cherishes all.—Dyoomūnee, he who sparkles in the sky.—Tūrūnee, the saviour.—Mitrū, the friend of the water-lily^t.—Grūhūpūtee, the lord of the stars.—Sūhūrangshoo, the thousand-rayed.—Rūvee, he who is to be praised.

◆

SECT. VI.—*Gūnēshū*.

THIS god is represented in the form of a fat short man, with a long belly, and an elephant's head^u. He has four hands; holding in one a shell, in another a chūkrū, in another a club, and in the fourth a water-lily. He sits upon a rat. In an elephant's head are two projecting teeth, but in Gūnēshū's only one, the other having been torn out by Vishnoo, when in the form of Pūrūsoo-ramū he wished to have an interview with Shīvū. Gūnēshū, who stood as door-keeper, denied him entrance, upon which a battle ensued, and Pūrūsoo-ramū, beating him, tore out one of his teeth.

^s The Sōōryū-shūtūkū says, the sun draws up the waters from the earth, and then lets them fall in showers again.

^t At the rising of the sun this flower expands itself, and when the sun retires shuts up its leaves again.

^u Sir W. Jones calls Gūnēshū the god of wisdom, and refers, as a proof of it, to his having an elephant's head. I cannot find, however, that this god is considered by any of the Hindoos as properly the god of wisdom; for though he is said to give knowledge to those who worship him to obtain it, that is what is ascribed also to other gods. The Hindoos in general, I believe, consider the elephant as a stupid animal, and it is a biting reproof to be called as stupid as an elephant.

The work called Gūnēshū-khūndū contains a most indecent story respecting the birth of this god; which, however necessary to the history, is so extremely indelicate that it cannot possibly be given. It is mentioned in this story, that Doorga cursed the gods; so that they have ever since been childless, except by criminal amours with females not their own wives.

When it was known that Doorga had given birth to a son, Shūnēē and the rest of the gods went to see the child. Shūnēē knew that if he looked upon the child it would be reduced to ashes; but Doorga took it as an insult that he should hang down his head, and refuse to look at her child. For some time he did not regard her reproofs; but at last, irritated, he looked upon Gūnēshū, and its head was instantly consumed*. The goddess, seeing her child headless^y, was overwhelmed with grief, and would have destroyed Shūnēē; but Brūmha prevented her, telling Shūnēē to bring the head of the first animal he should find lying with its head towards the north. He found an elephant in this situation, cut off its head, and fixed it upon Gūnēshū, who then assumed the shape he at present wears. Doorga was but

* This property is ascribed to Shūnēē, (Saturn,) to point out, no doubt, the supposed baneful influence of this planet. This resembles the fable of Saturn's devouring all his male children. The Ramayūnū contains a story respecting Dūshūrūt'hū and Shūnēē, in which it is said, that Dūshūrūt'hū was once angry with this god for preventing the fall of rain in his kingdom: he ascended his chariot to make war with him, when Shūnēē, by a single glance of his eyes, set the king's chariot on fire, and Dūshūrūt'hū, in the most dreadful state of alarm, fell from the skies.

^y One cause of this misfortune is said to be this: Doorga had laid her child to sleep with its head to the north, which is forbidden by the shastrū. The Anhikū-tūtwū declares, that if a person sleep with his head to the east, he will be rich; if to the south, he will have long life; if to the north, he will die; and if to the west, (except when on a journey,) he will have misfortunes.

little soothed when she saw her son with an elephant's head: to pacify her, Brūmha said, that amongst the worship of all the gods that of Gūnēshū should for ever bear the preference. In the beginning of every act of public worship therefore, certain ceremonies are constantly performed in honour of Gūnēshū^z. Not only is Gūnēshū thus honoured in religious ceremonies, but in almost all civil concerns he is particularly regarded: as, when a person is leaving his house to go a journey, he says, 'Oh! thou work-perfecting Gūnēshū, grant me success in my journey! Gūnēshū! Gūnēshū! Gūnēshū!'—At the head of every letter, a salutation is made to Gūnēshu^a. When a person begins to read a book he salutes Gūnēshu; and shop-keepers and others paint the name or image of this god over the doors of their shops or houses, expecting from his favour protection and success.

No public festivals in honour of Gūnēshū are held in Bengal. Many persons however choose him as their guardian deity, and are hence called Ganūpūtyūs.

At the full moon in the month Maghū, some persons make or buy a clay image, and perform the worship of Gūnēshū; when the officiating bramhūn performs the ceremonies common in the Hindoo worship, presenting offerings to the idol. This god is also worshipped at considerable length at the commencement of a wedding, as well as when the bride is presented to the bridegroom. Great numbers, especially from the western and southern provinces, ce-

^z It will occur to the reader, that in all sacrifices among the Romans prayers were first offered to Janus.

^a Gūnēshū is famed as writing in a beautiful manner: so that when a person writes a fine hand, people say, 'Ah! he writes like Gūnēshū.' This god is said to have first written the Mūhabharātū from the mouth of Vy-asūdevū.

lebrate the worship of Gūnéshū on the 4th of the new moon in Bhadrū, when several individuals in each place subscribe and defray the expence. Many persons keep in their houses a small metal image of Gūnéshū, place it by the side of the shalgramū, and worship it daily. At other times a burnt-offering of clarified butter is presented to this idol. Stone images of Gūnéshū are worshipped daily in the temples by the sides of the Ganges at Benares; but I cannot find that there are any temples dedicated to him in Bengal.

Gūnéshū is also called Hūridra-Gūnéshū. This name seems to have arisen out of the following story:—When Doorga was once preparing herself for bathing, she wiped off the turmerick, &c. with oil, and formed a kind of cake in her fingers^b. This she rolled together, and made into the image of a child; with which she was so much pleased, that she infused life into it, and called it Hūridra-Gūnéshū^c. The image of this god is yellow, having the face of an elephant. He holds in one hand a rope; in another the spike used by the elephant driver; in another a round sweetmeat, and in another a rod.

The principal names of Gūnéshū are: Gūnéshū, or, the lord of the gūnnū dévtas^d.—Dwoimatoorū, the two-mothered^e.—Ekū-dūntū, the one-toothed.—Hérūmbū, he who resides near to Shivū.—Lūmbodūrū, the long-bellied.—Gujanūnū, the elephant-faced.

^b The Hindoos have a custom of cleaning their bodies by rubbing them all over with turmerick; and then, taking oil in their hands, wiping it off again, when it falls as a paste all round them.

^c Hūridra is the name for turmerick.

^d These are the companions of Shivū.

^e One of Gūnéshū's mothers was Doorga, and the other the female elephant whose head he wears.

SECTION VII.—*Kartikéyũ.*

THIS is the god of war. He is represented sometimes with one, and at other times with six faces; is of a yellow colour; rides on a peacock^f; and holds in his right hand an arrow, and in his left a bow.

The reason of the birth of Kartikéyũ is thus told in the Koomarũ-sũmbhũvũ, one of the kavyũs:—Tarũkũ, a giant, performed religious austerities till he obtained the blessing of Brũmha, after which he oppressed both bramhũns and gods. He commanded that the sun should shine only so far as was necessary to cause the water-lily to blossom; that the moon should shine in the day as well as in the night. He sent the god Yũmũ to cut grass for his horses; commanded Pũvũnũ to prevent the wind from blowing any stronger than the puff of a fan; and in a similar manner tyrannized over all the gods. At length Indrũ called a council in heaven, when the gods applied to Brũmha: but the latter declared he was unable to reverse the blessing he had bestowed on Tarũkũ; that their only hope was Kartikéyũ, who should be the son of Shivũ, and destroy the giant.—After some time the gods assembled again to consult respecting the marriage of Shivũ, whose mind was entirely absorbed in religious austerities. After long consultations, Kũndũrpũ^g was called, and all the gods began to flatter him in such a manner that he was filled with pride, and declared he could do every thing: he could conquer the mind even of the great god Shivũ himself. That, ‘says Indrũ,’ is the very thing we want you to do.’ At this he appeared discouraged,

^f Juno's chariot was said to be drawn by peacocks.

^g The god of love.

but at length declared, that he would endeavour to fulfil his promise. He consulted his wife Rütēē; who reproved him for his temerity, but consented to accompany her husband. They set off, with Vūsüntū^h, to mount Himalūyū, where they found Shivū sitting under a roodrakshūⁱ tree, performing his devotions.

Previously to this, Himalūyū^k had been to Shivū, and proposed that Doorga, his daughter, should wait upon him, that he might uninterruptedly go on with his religious austerities; which offer Shivū accepted. One day, after the arrival of Kündūrpū and his party, Doorga, with her two companions Jūya and Vijūya, carried some flowers and a necklace to Shivū. In the moment of opening his eyes from his meditation, to receive the offering, Kündūrpū let fly his arrow; and Shivū, smitten with love, awoke as from a dream, and asked who had dared to interrupt his devotions.—Looking towards the south he saw Kündūrpū, when fire proceeded from the third eye in the centre of his forehead, and burnt Kündūrpū to ashes^l. The enraged god left this place for another forest, and Doorga, seeing no prospect of being married to Shivū, returned home full of sorrow. She sought at last to obtain her object by the power of religious austerities^m, in which she persevered till Shivū was drawn from his devotions, when the marriage was consummated.

^h The spring. The Hindoo poets always unite love and spring together.

ⁱ From the fruit of this tree necklaces are made, the wearing of which is a great act of merit among the Hindoos.

^k The mountain of this name personified.

^l Through the blessing of Shivū to Rütēē, Kündūrpū was afterwards born in the family of Krishnū, and took the name of Kamū-dévū; after which Rütēē (then called Mayavūtēē) was again married to him.

^m When this goddess, says a kavyū shastrū, told her mother that she

The Mūhabharūtū and Ramayūnū contain accounts of the birth of Kartikéyū, the fruit of this marriage; but they are so indelicate that the reader, I doubt not, will excuse their omission.

On the last evening in the month Kartikū, a clay image of this god is worshippedⁿ, and the next day thrown into the water. These ceremonies differ little from those at other festivals: but some images made on the occasion are not less than twenty-five cubits high; that is, a whole tree is put into the ground, and worshipped as a god. The height of the image obliges the worshippers to fasten the offerings to the end of a long bamboo, in order to raise them to the mouth of the god. This festival is distinguished by much singing, music, dancing, and other accompaniments of Hindoo worship.

The image of Kartikéyū is also made and set up by the side of his mother Doorga, at the great festival of this goddess in the month Ashwinū; and each day, at the close of the worship of Doorga, that of her son is performed at considerable length. In the month Choitrū also the worship of Kartikéyū accompanies that of his mother.—No bloody sacrifices are offered to this idol.

At the time when the above festival is held, some persons would perform austerities to obtain Shivū, her mother, alarmed, exclaimed—“Ooma! (Oh! mother!) how can you think of going into the forest to perform religious austerities? Stay and perform religious services at home, and you will obtain the god you desire. How can your tender form bear these severities? The flower bears the weight of the bee, but if a bird pitch upon it, it breaks directly.”

ⁿ Vast numbers of these images are made; in some towns as many as five hundred. It is supposed that in Calcutta more than five thousand are made and worshipped.

make^o or purchase clay images, which they place in their houses, and before which the officiating bramhūn performs the appointed ceremonies; preceding which a prayer is made for offspring. This is repeated sometimes on the anniversary of this day, for four years together. If the person, long disappointed, should, in these years, or soon after, happen to have a child, particularly a son, the whole is ascribed to Kartikéyū^p. When persons have made a vow to Kartikéyū, they present offerings to this idol at the completion of the vow. These vows are sometimes made to obtain the health of a child, or a son; a woman, when she makes this vow, thus addresses the god: 'Oh! Kartikéyū t'hakoorū^q, give me a son, and I will present to thee [here she mentions a number of offerings, as sweetmeats, fruits, &c.]—I do not want a female child.' This vow may be made at any time, or place, without any previous ceremony. When several women are sitting together, another woman perhaps comes amongst them, and, in the course of the conversation, asks the mistress of the house, 'Has your daughter-in-law any children yet?' She replies, in a plaintive manner, 'No, nothing but a girl.' Or she answers altogether in the negative, adding, 'I have again and again made vows to Kar-

^o He who makes an image for his own use is supposed to do an act of much greater merit than the person who purchases one.

^p A part of the Mūhabharütū is sometimes recited to obtain offspring. The part thus read is a list of the ancestors of Hūree, (a name of Vishnoo.) When a person wishes to have this ceremony performed, he employs a learned native to recite these verses, and another to examine, by a separate copy, whether the verses be read without mistake: if they be read improperly, no benefit will arise from the ceremony. If the person who seeks offspring be unable to attend himself during the ceremony, he engages some friend to hear the words in his stead.—Some verses of praise, addressed to Shivū, are also occasionally read in the ears of a husband and wife who are anxious to obtain offspring.

^q A term of respect, meaning excellent.

tikéyŭ, and even now I promise before you all, that if the god will give her a son, I will worship him in a most excellent manner, and my daughter-in-law will do it as long as she lives.'

There are no temples in Bengal dedicated to Kartikéyŭ, nor are any images of him kept in the houses of the Hindoos except during a festival.

The principal names of Kartikéyŭ are: Kartikéyŭ, or, he who was cherished by six females of the name of Kritika^r.—Mŭha-sénŭ, he who commands multitudes.—Shŭranŭnŭ, the six-faced.—Skŭndŭ, he who afflicts the giants.—Ŭgnibhoo, he who arose from Ŭgnee.—Goohŭ, he who preserves his troops in war.—Tarŭkŭjit, he who conquered Tarŭkŭ.—Vishakhŭ, he who was born under the constellation of this name.—Shikhi-vahŭnŭ, he who rides on a peacock.—Shuktee-dhŭrŭ, he who wields the weapon called shŭktee.—Koomarŭ, he who is perpetually young^s.—Krounchŭ-darŭnŭ, he who destroyed the giant Krounchŭ.

It is said that Kartikéyŭ was never married, but that Indrŭ gave him a mistress named Dévŭséna. He has no separate heaven, nor has Gŭneshŭ: they live with Shivŭ on mount Koilasŭ.

^r Six stars, (belonging to *ursa ma'or*) said to be the wives of six of the seven rishees. These females are called *Krittika*. They cherished Kartikéyŭ as soon as he was born in the forest of writing-reeds, and hence his name is a regular patronymic of *Krittika*, because they were as his mothers.

^s Under sixteen years of age.

SECTION VIII.—*Ugnee*.

THIS god is represented as a red corpulent man, with eyes, eye-brows, beard, and hair, of a tawny colour. He rides on a goat; wears a poita, and a necklace made with the fruits of *eleocarpus ganitrus*. From his body issue seven streams of glory, and in his right hand he holds a spear. He is the son of *Kushyūpū* and *Ūditē*.

Ūgnee has his forms of worship, meditation, &c. like other gods; but is especially worshipped, under different names, at the time of a burnt-offering, when clarified butter is presented to him. The gods are said to have two mouths, viz. that of the *bramhūn*, and of fire (*Ūgnee*).

At the full moon in the month *Maghū*, when danger from fire is considerable, some persons worship this god before the image of *Brūmha*, with the accustomed ceremonies, for three days. When any particular work is to be done by the agency of fire, as when a kiln of bricks is to be burnt, this god is worshipped; also when a trial by ordeal is to be performed.

Some *bramhūns* are distinguished by the name *sagnikū*, because they use sacred fire in all the ceremonies in which this element is used, from the time of birth to the burning of the body after death. This fire is preserved in honour of the god *Ūgnee*, and to make religious ceremonies more meritorious[†].

† There may be some resemblance in this to the custom of the Romans, in preserving a perpetual fire in the temple of *Vesta*.

Ūgnee, as one of the guardian deities of the earth, is worshipped at the commencement of every festival. He presides in the S. E.

Bhrigoo, a sagnikŭ bramhŭn and a great sage, once cursed his guardian deity Ūgnee, because the latter had not delivered Bhrigoo's wife from the hands of a giant, who attempted to violate her chastity when she was in a state of pregnancy. The child, however, sprang from her womb, and reduced the giant to ashes. Bhrigoo doomed the god to eat every thing. Ūgnee appealed to the assembled gods, and Brŭmha soothed him by promising, that whatever he ate should become pure. Ūgnee was also once cursed by one of the seven rishees, who turned him into cinders.

Ūrjoonŭ, the brother of Yoodhisthirŭ, at the entreaty of Ūgnee, set fire to the forest Khŭndŭvŭ, in order to cure him of a surfeit contracted in the following manner:—Mŭrootŭ, a king, entered upon a sacrifice which occupied him twelve months, during the whole of which time clarified butter had been pouring on the fire, in a stream as thick as an elephant's trunk: at length Ūgnee could digest no more, and he intreated Ūrjoonŭ to burn this forest, that he might eat the medicinal plants, and obtain his appetite again.

Swaha, the daughter of Kŭshyŭpŭ, was married to Ūgnee. Her name is repeated at the end of every incantation used at a burnt-offering, as well as in some other ceremonies. The reason of this honour is attributed to Ūgnee's uxoriousness.

The heaven of this god is called Ūgnee-lokŭ. His principal names are:—Vŭnhee, or, he who receives the clarified butter in the burnt-sacrifice (homŭ).—Vēētihoŭrŭ, he who puri-

fies those who perform the homū.—Dhūnūnjūyū, he who conquers (destroys) riches.—Kripētūyonee, he who is born from rubbing two sticks together.—Jwūlūnū, he who burns.—Ūgnee, he to whom fuel is presented.

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SECTION IX.—*Pūvūnū*.

THIS is the god of the winds, and the messenger of the gods^u. His mother Ūditēē, it is said, prayed to her husband, that this son might be more powerful than Indrū: her request was granted; but Indrū, hearing of this, entered the womb of Ūditēē, and cut the foetus, first into seven parts, and then each part into seven others. Thus Pūvūnū assumed forty-nine forms^x. He is meditated upon as a white man, sitting on a deer, with a white flag in his right hand.

Pūvūnū has no separate public festival, neither image, nor temple. As one of the ten guardian deities of the earth, he is worshipped, with the rest, at the commencement of every festival. He is said to preside in the N. W. Water is also offered to him in the daily ceremonies of the bramhūns; and, whenever a goat is offered to any deity, a service is paid to Vayoo, another form and name of Pūvūnū. In

^u I can find no agreement betwixt this god and either Mercury or Æolus.

^x The forty-nine points. The Hindoos have 49 instead of 32 points; and the pooranūs, which contain a story on every distinct feature of the Hindoo philosophy, have given this fable: and in the same manner all the elements are personified, and some remarkable story invented to account for their peculiar properties.

the work called Ūdikūrūnū-mala, a burnt-sacrifice of the flesh of goats^y is ordered to be offered to this god.

The following story is related of Pūvūnū in the Shrēē-bhagūvūtū:—On a certain occasion Narūdū paid a visit to Soomérou^z, and excited his pride in such a manner, that he protested the god Pūvūnū could not approach his summit. Narūdū carried the news of Soomérou's insolence to Pūvūnū, and advised him to go and break down the summit of Soomérou; which, even to the depth of 800 miles below the surface, was of solid gold. Pūvūnū went, and produced such a tempest, that the earth trembled to its centre; and the mountain god, terribly alarmed, invoked Gūroorū, who came to his relief, and, covering the mountain with his wings, secured it from the wrath of Pūvūnū. For twelve months, however, the storm raged so that the three worlds were hastening to destruction. The gods desired Narūdū to prevail on Pūvūnū to compose the difference with Soomérou: instead of complying with which the mischievous rishee went, and calling Pūvūnū a fool for exciting such a storm to no purpose, told him that as long as Gūroorū protected the mountain with his wings, there was no hope; but that, if he would attack Soomérou when Gūroorū was carrying Vishnoo out on a journey, he might easily be revenged. This opportunity soon occurred: all the gods (330,000,000) were invited to Shivū's marriage with Parvūtēē, among whom were the mountains Soomérou, Trikōōtū, Oodūyū^a, Ūstū^b, Vindhyū, Malyūvanū, Gūndhūma-dūnū,

^y The goat, it will be remembered, was slain in the sacrifices of Bacchus.

^z The mountain of this name personified.

^a Mountains over which the sun rises.

^b Behind which the sun sets.

Chitrūkōōtū, Mūlūyū, Nilū, Moinakū^c, &c. Vishnoo, riding on Gūroorū, also went to the marriage, and all the heavens were left empty. Seizing this opportunity, Pūvūnū flew to Sooméroo, and, breaking the summit of the mountain, hurled it into the sea^d.

Pūvūnū is charged with an adulterous intercourse with Ūnjūna, the wife of Késhūrēē, a monkey. The fruit of this intercourse was Hūnoomanū.

Pūvūnū was once inflamed with lust towards the hundred daughters of Kooshūnabhū, a rajūrshee; and because they refused his offers, he entered the body of each, and produced a curvature of the spine. They were made straight again by a king named Brūmhū-dūttū, to whom they were married.

The name of the heaven of this god is Vayoo-lokū. His principal names are:—Shwūsūnū, or, he who is the giver of breath.—Spūrshūnū, the toucher.—Vayoo, he who travels.—Matūrishwa, he who gave his mother sorrow^e.—Prishūdūshwa, he who rides on the deer.—Gūndhūvūhū, he who carries odours.—Ashoogū, he who goes swiftly.—Marootū, without whom people die.—Nūbhūswūtū, he who moves in the air.—Puvūnū, the purifier.—Prūbhūngjūnū, the breaker,

^c Some of these belong to the snowy range north of India, and others to the tropical range dividing south from north India. These and other mountains are personified, and by the Hindoo poets are designated as the residence of the gods, and by poetical licence ranged among the inferior gods.

^d Here it became the island of Ceylon, (Lūnka.)

^e When Indrū cut him into forty-nine pieces in the womb.

SECTION X.—*Vūroonū*.

THIS is the god of the waters. His image is painted white; he sits on a sea-animal called *mūkūrū*, with a rope^f in his right hand.

Vūroonū's name is repeated daily in the worship of the *bramhūns*; but his image is never made for worship, nor has he any public festival or temple in Bengal. He is worshipped however as one of the guardian deities of the earth; and also by those who farm the lakes in Bengal, before they go out a fishing: and in times of drought people repeat his name to obtain rain^g.

A story of this god is contained in the *Pūdmū pooranū* to this purport:—*Ravūnū* was once carrying an *ūnadee-lingū* from *Himalūyū* to *Lūnka*^h, in order that he might accomplish all his ambitious schemes against the gods: for it was the property of this stone, also called *kamū*ⁱ-*lingū*, to grant the worshipper all his desires, whatever they might be. *Shivū*, however, when permitting *Ravūnū* to remove this his image to *Lūnka*, made him promise, that wherever he suffered it to touch the ground, there it should remain.

^f This weapon is called *pashū*, and has this property, that whomsoever it catches, it binds so fast that he can never get loose. All the gods, giants, *rakshāsūs*, &c. learn the use of this weapon.

^g At the time of a drought, it is common for *bramhūns* to sit in crowds by the sides of the *Ganges*, or any other river, and address their prayers to this god. A *bramhūn* once informed me, that he remembered when *Krishnū-Chūndrū*, the *raja* of *Nūvū-dwēēpū*, gave presents to vast multitudes of *bramhūns* thus employed; and that, in the midst of their prayers, *Vūroonū* sent a plentiful supply of rain.

^h Ceylon.

ⁱ *Kamū* means desire.

When the gods saw that Ravūnū was carrying this stone to Lūnka, all the heavens were in a state of agitation: for the gods knew, that if Ravūnū could be permitted to accomplish his wishes, neither Indrū nor any other god would continue on his throne. Council after council was held, and applications made to different gods in vain. It was at last resolved that Vūroonū should enter the belly of Ravūnū, who would thereby be compelled to set the stone down, while discharging his urine^k. Vūroonū accordingly entered the belly of Ravūnū, as he was carrying the lingū on his head; and the latter soon began to feel the effects of his visit. His belly swelled prodigiously:—he proceeded however on his journey, till at last he could wait no longer. At this moment Indrū, in the form of an old bramhūn, meeting him, Ravūnū, after asking who he was, and where he was going, entreated him to hold the lingū for a short time, promising to bestow on him the greatest favours; to which the bramhūn consented, agreeing to hold the stone an hour, but no longer. Ravūnū told him he would not detain him half that time; and squatted on his hams to rid himself of Vūroonū. After he had thus sat for four hours, the bramhūn, complaining he could hold the stone no longer, threw it down—when the lower part sunk into the world of the hydras, and the top is said to be visible to this day at Voidyū-nat'hū, a place in the zillah of Beerbhoom, where the river Khūrsoo is believed to have arisen from the urine of this enemy of the gods^l. Ravūnū, when he

^k Ravūnū could not hold the lingū while in this act, as a person hereby becomes unclean until he has bathed. This is the strict rule of the shastrū: at present, however, should a person, in the midst of his worship, be compelled to discharge urine, he does not bathe, but only changes his clothes.

^l The Hindoos do not drink the water of this river, but bathe in and drink the water of a pool there, which they have called Nūvū-gūnga, viz. the New Gūnga.

arose, and saw what had taken place, went home full of rage and disappointment: some accounts add, that he went and fought with the gods in the most furious manner.

The heaven of this god, called Vūroonŭ-lokŭ, is 800 miles in circumference, and was formed by Vishwŭkŭrma, the divine architect. In the centre is a grand canal of pure water. Vūroonŭ, and his queen Varoonĕĕ, sit on a throne of diamonds; and around them the court, among whom are Sŭmoodrŭ, Gŭnga, and other river gods and goddesses^m; the twelve Adityŭs, and other deities; the hydras; Oira-vŭtŭ; the doityŭs; the danŭvŭs, &c. The pleasures of this heaven consist in the gratification of the senses, as in the heavens of Indrŭ and others. There does not seem to be a vestige of any thing here, but what would exactly meet the wishes of a libertine.

*A scene in the heaven of Vūroonŭ:—*Nimee, a king, invited Vŭshisht'hŭ to preside as priest over the ceremonies at a sacrifice he was about to perform. Vŭshisht'hŭ, being engaged at that time as priest to perform a sacrifice for some other king, from whom he expected very large presents, excused himself for the present; when Nimee, after using entreaty in vain, employed another sage as priest. Vŭshisht'hŭ, having concluded the sacrifice in which he was engaged, proceeded to the palace of Nimee; but hearing that the king had employed another priest, was filled with rage, and pronounced a curse on the king, by which he was reduced to ashes. Before the curse took effect, however, the king cursed Vŭshisht'hŭ, and reduced his body also to ashes. The soul of Vŭshisht'hŭ ascended to Brŭmha, to enquire how he was to procure a body again.

^m Among these deities are included gods of wells, pools, lakes, basins, whirlpools, &c.

Brūmha said, 'Go to the gods Vūroonū and Sōōryū.' He went, and obtained his body in the following manner: Sōōryū, captivated with the sight of Oorvūshēē, a courtesan, as she was dancing in Indrū's heaven, invited her to his house. As she was going, Vūroonū met her, and became enamoured of her also. [Here the story becomes too filthy to be written.—] From the inflamed passions of these two gods, Ūgūstyū, an eminent ascetic, was born, and Vūshisht'hū, one of the most exalted of the Hindoo saints, obtained a new body. The priests who had been employed by Nimee, fearing they should lose all employment hereafter if they suffered the king thus to perish, at the close of the sacrifice formed from the ashes a young man, to whom they gave the name of Jūnūkū; who became the father of Sēēta, the wife of Ramū.

The meaning of the name Vūroonū is, he who surrounds.—This god is also called Prūchéta, or the wise.—Pashēē, he who holds a rope.—Yadūsang-pūtee, the lord of the watery tribes.—Ūppūtee, the lord of waters.

SECTION XI.—*Yūmū.*

THIS god is called the holy king, who judges the dead. His image is that of a green man, with red garments; inflamed eyes; having a crown on his head, and a flower stuck in his hairⁿ; sitting on a buffaloe, with a club in his right

ⁿ It is very common to see a flower, which has been presented to an image, stuck in the bunch of hair which the Hindoos tie behind the head. This is done under the idea that the flower has some virtue in it. Several shastrūs prescribe this practice, and promise rewards to the person who places in his hair flowers which have been presented to his guardian deity, or to any other god.

hand. His dreadful teeth, grim aspect, and terrific shape, fill the inhabitants of the three worlds with terror.

An annual festival is held in honour of Yümü on the second day of the moon's increase in the month Kartikü, when an image of clay is made, and worshipped with the usual ceremonies for one day, and then thrown into the river. No bloody sacrifices are offered to this god.

Yümü is also worshipped at the commencement of other festivals, as one of the ten guardian deities of the earth. He presides in the South.

Every day the Hindoos offer water to Yümü, in the ceremony called tŭrpŭnŭ, as well as annually on the 14th of the month Ūgrŭhayŭnŭ, when they repeat several of his names.

At the time of other festivals the Hindoos sometimes make an image of the mother of Yümü°, and worship it. At other times children in play make this image, and pretend to worship it.

On the first of the month Kartikü, a curious ceremony takes place in every part of Bengal:—the unmarried girls of each house engage a near relation to dig a small pit near the front of the house, at the four corners of which they sow rice, or barley, or wheat, and plant some stalks of the plantain or other tree; they also plant other branches in the midst of the pit. The place being thus prepared, every morning for a month these girls, after putting on clean ap-

° A very old woman, who is at the same time a great scold, is called by the Hindoos the mother of Yümü.

parel, and sprinkling their heads with the water of the Ganges to purify themselves, present flowers, &c. to Yūmū by the side of this small pit, repeating an incantation. Each day they put a single kouree^p in an earthen pot, and at the end of the ceremony present the thirty kourees to the person who dug the pit. They perform this ceremony to procure from Yūmū either husbands, or sons, or happiness, and also that they may escape punishment after death.

I have heard of some Hindoos, who, rejecting the worship of other gods, worship only Yūmū; alleging that their future state is to be determined only by Yūmū, and that they have nothing therefore to hope or to fear from any beside him.

Yūmū is judge of the dead. He is said to hold a court, in which he presides as judge, and has a person to assist him, called Chitrū-gooptū^q, who keeps an account of the actions of men. A number of officers arē also attached to the court, who bring the dead to be judged. If the deceased persons have been wicked, Yūmū sends them to their particular hell; or if good, to some place of happiness. The poor Hindoos, at the hour of death, sometimes fancy they see Yūmū's officers, in a frightful shape, coming to fetch them away.

Yūmū is said to reside at Yūmalūyū, on the south side of the earth^r. All souls, wherever the persons die, are sup-

^p Shells from the Maldive islands, which pass for money in Bengal. More than six thousand of these shells may be bought for a roopee.

^q That is, he who paints in secret; or, he who writes the fates of men in secret.

^r One Hindoo sometimes jokes with another, by asking him where he is going, as he seems to be proceeding southwards.

posed to go to Yūmū in four hours and forty minutes; and a dead body cannot be burnt till that time have elapsed.

The following account of Yūmalūyū, and of Voitūrūnēē, the river to be crossed after death, is taken from the Mūhabharūtū:—After Brūmha had created the three worlds, viz. heaven, earth, and patūlū, he recollected that a place for judgment, and for the punishment of the wicked, was wanting. He therefore called Vishwūkūrma, the architect of the gods, and gave him orders to prepare a very superb palace. Opposite the south door Vishwūkūrma made four pits for the punishment of the wicked. Three other doors were reserved for the entrance of the good, that they might not see the place of punishment when they went to be judged. Brūmha, taking with him the gūndhūrvūs, the giants, &c. went to see the place, and gave it the name of Sūnjēē-vūnēē. The gūndhūrvūs asked Brūmha to give them this beautiful palace. Brūmha asked them if they were willing to inflict the punishments on the wicked: to which they replied in the negative. The giants were next about to seize the place by force; to prevent which Brūmha ordered Vishwūkūrma to form a vast trench around, and to fill it with water, which became the river Voitūrūnēē. Brūmha next ordered Ūgnee to enter the river, and the waters became hot. Having thus surrounded the hall of judgment with a river of boiling water, the creator ordered, that after death each one should be obliged to swim across. This, however, subjected the good to punishment: to prevent which it was ordained, that the offering of a black cow to a bramhūn should cool the river, and render the person's passage easy^s. It was still necessary, that some

^s I do not find that the Hindoos have any ferryman, like Charon, or boat to cross this river; though they talk of crossing it by laying hold of

one should occupy this place, and judge the dead; and Brūmha assigned this work to Yūmū.

The Ramayūnū contains the following story about Yūmū:—Soon after Gūnga came down to the earth, Yūmū was very angry with the gods, as she left him nothing to do in his office of judge; all the people, however sinful, through her power ascending to heaven. His officers, in a rage, were about to give up their places, and leave him. On applying to Indrū, he advised him not to place his messengers in any situation where the wind, passing over Gūnga, blew; for that all persons touched even by the wind of this sacred river had all their sins removed, and would go to heaven^t.

Many other stories are to be found in the pooranūs, some of them supposed to be related by persons who have been at Yūmalūyū: the two following are of this description.—In a certain village lived two persons of the same name; one of whom had lived out his whole time, the other had many years to live. Chitrū-gooptū, examining his register, sent Yūmū's messengers to fetch the person whose appointed time was expired: the messengers went, but brought the wrong person. On re-examining his records, Chitrū-gooptū found out the mistake, and directed the officers to hasten back with the soul before the relations had burnt the body. While at Yūmalūyū, this person looked all around, and saw, in one place, the punishments

the tail of the black cow which they offered in order to obtain a safe passage. It is very common in Bengal for a herdsman to cross a river by taking hold of a cow's tail.

Whatever the Hindoos may think of Gūnga's taking away their sins, it is acknowledged by all, that the inhabitants who live on the banks of the Ganges are the most corrupt and profligate of all the Hindoos.

inflicted on the wicked: Yūmū's officers were chastising some, by casting them into pits of ordure; others, by throwing them into the arms of a red hot image of a woman^u; others, by making their bellies immensely large, and their mouths as small as the eye of a needle; others, by feeding them with red hot balls; others, by throwing them into pits filled with devouring worms and insects, or with fire. In other places he saw those who had practised severe mortifications living in a state of the greatest magnificence; and women who had been burnt on the funeral pile, sitting with their husbands, enjoying the greatest delights. As he was coming away, he saw preparations making for the reception of some one in the highest style of grandeur, and asked the messengers who was to enjoy this. The messengers replied that it was for one of his neighbours, a very holy man, whose appointed time was nearly expired; and who, in fact, died soon afterwards.

A story very similar to this is often related of a person named Būlūramū, of the voidyū cast, who lived some years ago at Choopēē, near Nūdēēya. This man, to all appearance, died; and was lying by the side of the Ganges, while his relations were collecting the wood and other materials to burn the body. Before the fire was lighted, however, the body began to move, and in a little while the dead man arose, and told his friends of his having been carried by mistake to Yūmalūyū, where he saw terrific sights of the punishments of the wicked. This man lived fifteen years after this journey to Yūmū's palace.

^u This instrument is used for the punishment of adulterers. When Ravinū was carrying off Sēēta by force, she reminded him, that for this crime he would have to go into the burning arms of this image after death.

The following story was invented, no doubt, in order to check excessive sorrow for deceased relations.—A rich bramhūn had only one son, who grew up to manhood, and was loved almost to distraction by his parents*. This son, however, died in his youth, and his wife was burnt with him on the funeral pile. The father and mother were so overwhelmed with distress, that for years they refused all comfort. During this time an old servant, who had served the bramhūn many years, and had eaten of his food^v, died, and, for his merit, was made one of Yūmū's officers. This man was going one day to fetch the soul of some one from the village where he had once lived, and saw his former master weeping by the side of the road for the loss of his son. Assuming his old form, he raised up his master, and endeavoured to comfort him, but in vain. He then told him, that he was become one of Yūmū's officers, on account of the merit he had obtained by serving him (the bramhūn), and eating of his food; and that now, to remove his sorrow, he would take him and shew him his son. The old man got on his back, and the officer immediately carried him to the residence of Yūmū, and shewed him his son and daughter-in-law in the greatest happiness, surrounded with every delight, playing at chess. But the son, having lost all affection for his parent, would not even look at him, though exhorted to it by his wife. He replied, that in numerous transmigrations it was very likely that this old man might

* The Hindoos in general carry their attachment to children, especially to sons, to the greatest excess.—They are amazed at the supposed want of affection in Europeans, who leave their parents in order to traverse foreign countries; some of them without the hope of ever seeing them again.

^v It is a very meritorious action for a shōodrū to eat the leavings of a bramhūn. Hence a shōodrū will serve a bramhūn for rather less wages than another person.

have been *his* son again and again. The old man was so incensed, to see that his daughter-in-law had more affection for him than his own son, for whom he was dying with grief, that he desired the constable to carry him back. The old bramhūnēē would not believe that her son's affections were thus alienated from them: the constable, therefore, carried her also to see him; but she met with the same treatment. They both immediately renounced their grief for a son who had lost all his filial affection, and resolved to think no more about him.

Other stories abound in the pooranūs respecting Yūmū, some of which relate to disputes betwixt the messengers of this god and those of some other god, about the soul of a departed person, whether it shall be happy or miserable. I insert two of these stories:—When the sage Ūnimandūvyū was a child of five years old, he put a straw into the tail of a locust, and let it fly away. In advanced years, while once employed in performing religious austerities, he was seized as a thief by the officers of justice, and, as he gave no answer on his trial, the king took it for granted that he was guilty, and ordered him to be impaled. After he had been impaled four years, his body had undergone no change, and, though he appeared perfectly insensible to human objects, he was evidently alive. The king, being informed of this, was filled with astonishment, and declared that he was certainly some great ascetic, equal to one of the gods. He then immediately ordered him to be taken down; but in endeavouring to extract the wood upon which he had been impaled, it broke within his body. The sage was then suffered to depart, and, after some time, his religious abstraction was interrupted; though his mind had been so set upon his god, that neither impaling him for four years, nor breaking the stake within his body, had disturbed his

intense devotion. On awaking from this state he discovered what had been done to him, and that he had suffered all this from the hands of Yǔmǔ, for having pierced the locust when he was a child. He was exceedingly angry with Yǔmǔ for such unrighteous judgment. To punish a person for a sin committed at the age of five years, and for so small a crime to impale him for four years, was what he could not bear. He then cursed Yǔmǔ, and doomed him to be born on earth, and to take the name of Vidoorǔ, the son of a servant girl in the house of the mother of Védǔ-vyasǔ.—How the administration of justice in the other world was carried on after Yǔmǔ assumed human birth, this story does not relate.—What an excellent religion for a wicked man : the criminal can punish his judge !

Ůjamilǔ had committed the most enormous crimes, having killed cows and bramhǔns, drank spirits, and lived in the practice of evil all his days. He had four sons ; the name of one was Narayǔnǔ. In the hour of death Ůjamilǔ was extremely thirsty, and thus called to his son : ‘Narayǔnǔ, Narayǔnǔ, Narayunǔ, give me some water.’ After his decease, the messengers of Yǔmǔ seized him, and were about to drag him to a place of punishment, when Vishnoo’s messengers came to rescue him. A furious battle ensued, but Vishnoo’s messengers were victorious, and carried off Ůjamilǔ to Voikoontǔ, the heaven of Vishnoo. The messengers of Yǔmǔ, enraged, returned to their master, threw their clothes and staves at his feet, and declared that they would serve him no longer, as they got nothing but disgrace in all they did. Yǔmǔ ordered Chitrǔ-gooptǔ, the recorder, to examine his books. He did so, and reported that this Ůjamilǔ had been a most notorious sinner, and that it was impossible for him to reckon up his sins, they were so numerous. Yǔmǔ hastened to Voikoontǔ,

and demanded of Vishnoo an explanation of this affair. Vishnoo reminded him, that however wicked this man might have been, he had repeated the name Narayñũ in his last moments; and that he (Yũmũ) ought to know, that if a man, either when laughing, or by accident, or in anger, or even in derision, repeated the name of Vishnoo, he would certainly go to heaven, though, like Ūjamilũ, covered with crimes, he had not a single meritorious deed to lay in the balance against them.—This is the doctrine that is universally maintained by the great body of the Hindoos: hence, when a person in a dying situation is brought down to the river side, he is never exhorted to repentance, but is urged in his last moments to repeat the names of certain gods, as his passport to heaven. A Hindoo shopkeeper one day declared to the author, that he should live in the practice of adultery, lying, &c. till death; and that then, repeating the name of Krishñũ, he should, without difficulty, ascend to heaven. How shocking this sentiment! How dreadful this mistake!

Description of the heaven of Yũmũ, from the Mũhabharũtũ.
 This heaven, formed by Vishwũkũrma, is 800 miles in circumference. From hence are excluded the fear of enemies, and sorrow both of body and mind; the climate is mild and salubrious; and each one is rewarded in kind, according to his works: thus he, who has given much away on earth, receives a far greater quantity of the same things in heaven; he who has not been liberal, will have other kinds of happiness, and will see food, houses, lands, &c. but will receive nothing. All kinds of excellent food are here heaped up into mountains². To this heaven have been raised a great number of Hindoo kings, whose names are

* This seems to be a heaven for gluttons!

given in the Mūhabharūtū. The pleasures of this heaven are like those of Indrū-poorū: the senses are satiated with gratifications as gross as the writer of this pooranū, the licentious Vyasū, could make them.

Yūmū married Vijūyū, the daughter of Vēērū, a bramhūn. The Bhūvishyūt pooranū contains the following story respecting this marriage:—Yūmū was so pleased with this female, on account of her having performed the Boodhashtūmēē vrūtū, that he appeared to her, and offered her marriage. She was alarmed at the sight of this stranger, and asked him who he was. When she found it was Yūmū, the judge of the dead, who was thus paying his addresses to her, she was filled with terror. Yūmū calmed her fears, and permitted her to acquaint her brother; as he would be full of distress after her departure, if he were left in ignorance. Her brother told her she was certainly mad:—‘What, to be married to Yūmū! A fine husband truly!’ She however consented, and Yūmū conveyed her to his palace, but charged her never to go to the southwards. She suspected that there Yūmū had another favourite, and would not be satisfied till he had explained to her, that his reasons for forbidding her to go southwards were, that there the wicked were punished, and that she would not be able to bear so dreadful a sight. All these warnings, however, were given in vain: while Yūmū was one day busy, she took another female or two, and went southwards, till the cries of the damned had nearly terrified her to distraction: to add to the horror of the scene, she saw her mother in torments. On her return, Yūmū found her in a state of the greatest distress, and soon discovered the cause. She insisted on Yūmū’s delivering her mother that very day, or he should see her face no more. Yūmū declared this to be impossible; that her own bad conduct had

brought her there, and that she could only be delivered, according to the forms of the shastrū, after suffering the punishment due to her. Vijūyū became impatient and clamorous; till Yūmū told her, that if she could get the merit of the Boodhastūmēē vrūtū transferred to her by some one, she might deliver her mother. Yūmū further informed her, that on earth a certain queen, who had performed the Boodhashtūmēē vrūtū, had been three days in the pains of child-birth; and that, if she would perform a certain ceremony, which he described to her, the queen would be delivered, and would in return transfer the merits of this vrūtū to her mother, who would immediately be delivered from torments. Vijūyū took this advice, and thus procured the deliverance of her mother from hell.

Yūmū's principal names are: Dhūrmū-rajū, or, the holy king.—Pitripūtee, the lord of the ancients.—Sūmūvurtee, he who judges impartially.—Prētū-rat, the lord of the dead.—Kritantū, the destroyer.—Yūmoona-bhrata, the brother of Yūmoona^a.—Shūmūnū, he who levels all.—Yūmū-rat, the chief of the fourteen Yūmūs^b.—Yūmū, he who takes out of the world.—Kalū, time.—Dūndudhūrū, he who holds the rod of punishment.—Shraddhū-dévū, the god of the ceremonies paid to deceased ancestors; or, he who eats his share of the shraddhū.—Voivūswūtū, the son of Vivūswūt, or Sōōryū.—Ūntūkū, he who kills, or puts an end to life.

^a The river Yūmoona.

^b Yūmū has thirteen assistants, whose names are here given as different names of this judge of the dead.

SECT. XII.—*The Worship of the “Host of Heaven.”*

THE Hindoos, like other idolatrous nations, have gone into the worship of the heavenly bodies. The planets, the constellations, the signs of the zodiac, the stars in general, the star Canopus^c, the star Kalū-poorooshū, &c. have all been deified, and are worshipped with appropriate forms of petition, praise, &c. some of them at the festivals of other gods, and others at different times. The constellations are worshipped separately at the births of children, as well as at the anniversaries of these births till the time of death.

Some persons suppose, that the worship of the elements was the primitive idolatry of the Hindoos, and that of heroes the invention of later times. It is plain, however, that the védūs, supposed to be the most ancient of the Hindoo writings, countenance the worship of deified heroes. These books contain accounts of Brūmha, Vishnoo, and Shivū, and most of the other deities. A paragraph in the Rig-védū speaks of the gods choosing Indrū to be their king, whom they placed on a throne fancifully constructed with texts of the védū: (amongst all the gods none are charged with greater crimes than Indrū, who seduced the wife of his spiritual guide :) indeed from a variety of facts it is highly probable, that to the védūs we are to attribute the foundation of this whole fabric of superstition. These books contain prayers to procure the destruction of enemies, as well as encourage the burning of widows alive^d, which is

^c Called by the Hindoos Ugūstyū, the sage.

^d ‘O fire, let these women, with bodies anointed with ghee, eyes (coloured) with stibium and void of tears, enter the parent of water, that they may not be separated from their husbands, may be in union with excellent husbands, be sinless, and be jewels among women.’ *Rig-védū*.

surely a far greater crime than any thing done in the presence of the images of Ramū or Krishnū. The ancient idolatry, therefore, seems to have been as corrupt as any thing practised at present.—Is it not probable that the horrid worship of Moloch was really that of the element of fire?

I do not find, however, that the heavenly bodies are worshipped on the tops of houses, as appears to have been the case among those nations from whom the Jews learnt their idolatry. It is said of Manasseh, that ‘he worshipped all the host of heaven, and served them.’ Josiah, the son of Manasseh, put down all that burnt incense unto Baal, to the sun, and to the moon, and to the planets, and to all the host of heaven. By the prophet Jeremiah God threatens, that the people shall bring out the bones of the king of Judah, of the princes, priests, prophets, and people; and adds, ‘And they shall spread them before the sun, the moon, and all the host of heaven, whom they have served; they shall not be gathered nor be buried; they shall be for dung upon the face of the earth.’ By the prophet Zephaniah, God threatens to cut off them ‘that worship the host of heaven upon the house-tops.’ Stephen, in rehearsing the history of the children of Israel before the Jewish council, declares, that God formerly gave up their forefathers to worship the host of heaven; and mentions among other objects of worship the star of the god Remphan.

This worship, which has been so general among heathen nations, seems to have originated in judicial astrology, and in the belief that the heavenly bodies have a great influence upon human events. Hindoos, whose birth under a supposed evil planet has been ascertained, are often filled with melancholy; some abandon themselves to despair,

careless of what becomes of an existence connected with such omens. The reader will perceive, in reading the account of Saturn, to what a degree the Hindoos dread the influence of this planet, especially at the time when it is in a certain sign. Against fears of this kind the prophet Jeremiah warned the Jews: 'Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven, for the heathen are dismayed at them.'

SECT. XIII.—*The Worship of the Nine Grūhūs^e, or Planets.*

At the great festivals a small offering is presented to all the planets at once; but except on these occasions they are never worshipped together. They are, however, frequently worshipped separately by the sick or unfortunate, who suppose themselves to be under the baneful influence of some planet. At these times the nine planets are worshipped, one after the other, in regular succession. The ceremonies consist of the common forms of worship before other images, and close with a burnt-offering to each planet.

To Sōōryū are offered in the burnt-sacrifice small pieces of the shrub ūrkū^f; to Chūndrū, those of the pūlashū^g; to Mars, those of the khūdirū^h; to Mercury, those of the ūp-amargūⁱ; to Jupiter, those of the ūshwūtt'hū^k; to Venus, those of the ooroombūrū; to Saturn, those of the shūmēē^l;

^e These stars are called grūhūs, because they make known to people good and evil.

^f *Asclepias gigantia*.

^g *Butea frondosa*.

^h *Mimosa catechu*.

ⁱ *Achyranthes aspera*.

^k *Ficus religiosa*.

^l *Mimosa albida*.

to Rahoo, blades of dōōrva grass; and to Kétoo, blades of kooshū grass.

In honour of Sōōryū boiled rice, mixed with molasses, is burnt; milk is to be mixed with the rice offered to Chūndrū; with that to Mars, curds; with that to Mercury, clarified butter: to Jupiter is offered frumenty; to Venus, boiled rice alone; to Saturn, various kinds of food; to Rahoo, goat's flesh or fish; to Kétoo, blood from the ear of a goat, mixed with rice.

The image of Sōōryū is to be a round piece of mixed metal, twelve fingers in diameter; that of Chūndrū is to be like a half moon, a cubit from end to end; that of Mars, a triangular piece of metal measured by the thickness of six fingers; that of Mercury, a golden bow measuring the thickness of two fingers from one extremity to the other; that of Jupiter, like a flower of the water-lily; that of Venus, a four-square piece of silver; that of Saturn, an iron scymitar; that of Rahoo, an iron mūkūrū; and that of Kétoo, an iron snake.

The fees accompanying the worship of the different planets are various: at that of Sōōryū, a milch cow; of Chūndrū, a shell; of Mars, a bull; of Mercury, a morsel of gold; of Jupiter, a piece of cloth; of Venus, a horse; of Saturn, a black cow; of Rahoo, a piece of iron; and of Kétoo, a goat.

When the officiating bramhūn performs the worship of separate planets, he must put on vestments of divers colours, and offer different kinds of flowers.

SECT. XIV.—*Rūvee^m, the Sun.*

THIS god, the son of Kūshyūpū, the sage, is painted red. He holds a water-lily in each hand, and rides in a chariot drawn by seven yellowⁿ horses.

Rūvee, as one of the planets, is worshipped only at the great festivals. The Jyotish-tūtwū says, that if a person be born under the planet Rūvee, he will possess an anxious mind, be subject to disease and other sufferings, be an exile, a prisoner, and endure much sorrow from the loss of his wife, children, and property.

This god has been already noticed under the name of Sōōryū: but in that account several particulars were omitted by mistake; and which I insert here, though they properly belong to another form of this idol.—While bathing, the Hindoos repeat certain incantations, in order to bring the waters of all the holy places in the heaven of this god into the spot where they are standing, and thus obtain the merit of bathing not only in Gūnga, but in all the sacred rivers, &c. in the heaven of Sōōryū. After bathing too the Hindoos make their obeisance to this god in a standing posture; the more devout draw up their joined hands to the forehead, gaze at the sun, make prostration to him, and then turn round seven times, repeating certain forms of petition and praise. On these occasions they hold up water in their joined hands, and then ‘pour out a drink-offering’ to the sun.

When the terrific being which sprung out of Shivū’s

^m Hence Rūvee-varū, or Sunday.

ⁿ Not green, as mentioned by Mr. Maurice.

bunch of hair went with all the bhōōtūs, &c. to destroy Dūkshū's sacrifice, all the gods being present, this monster seized on Sōōryū and knocked out his teeth: in consequence, at the time of worship, only soft things, as flour, &c. are now offered to this god, such as a toothless old man might eat.

Sōōryū is charged in the Mūhabharūtū with ravishing Koontee, a virgin, from whence Kūrnnū, a giant, was born.



SECT. XV.—*Somū*°, or *Chūndrū*, the Moon.

THE image of Somū is that of a white man, drawn by ten horses, or sitting on the water-lily. With his right hand he is giving a blessing, and in the other he holds a club.

In the work called Ūdhikūrūnū-mala, a sacrifice is ordered to be performed to Somū, and the worshipper is promised a place in the heaven of this god.

All the Hindoo ceremonies are regulated by the rising or setting, the waxing or waning of the moon. The Jyotish-tūtwū says, 'If a person be born under the planet Somū, he will have many friends; will possess elephants, horses, and palanqueens; be honourable and powerful; will live upon excellent food, rest on superb couches, &c.'

A race of Hindoo kings are said to have descended from Somū by Rohinēē^p, and are called the children of the moon.

° Hence Somū-varū, or Mouday.

^p The Hyades.

The first of these was Boodhū, and the forty-sixth Yoodhist'hirū.

This god on a certain occasion was forcibly carried away by Gūroorū, the bird on which Vishnoo rides, and delivered up to the giants. The giants, anxious to become immortal as well as the gods, promised Gūroorū that if he would bring the moon by force, so that they might drink the nectar supposed to exist in the bright parts of that planet, they would deliver his mother from the curse pronounced against her by her son Ūroonū, by which she had been doomed to become the slave of her sister. Gūroorū soon seized the god, and placed him trembling among the assembled giants; but while the latter were gone to bathe, and prepare for partaking of the waters of immortality, Indrū arrived and delivered the captive, and thus disappointed these implacable enemies of the gods.

Somū is charged with seducing the wife of Vrihūspūtee, his preceptor. See p. 93.

The chief names of this god are: Somū, or, he from whom the water of immortality springs.—Himangshoo, he whose beams are cooling.—Chūndrū, he at whose rising people rejoice.—Indoo, the great.—Koomoodū-bandūvū, the friend of the flower Koomoodū^a.—Vidhoo, he who causes the gods to drink the water of life.—Soodhangshoo, he whose rays are as the water of life.—Oshūdhēēshū, the lord of medicinal plants.—Nishapūtee, the lord of night.—Ūbjū, he who was born from the waters.—Joivatrikū, the preserver of men.—Glou, he who decreases.—Mrigrankū,

^a Nymphœa lotus. After the rising of the moon this flower is said by the Hindoos to expand.

he on whose lap sits a deer^r.—Kulanidhee, he with whom are the kūlas^s.—Dwijūrajū, the chief of the bramhūns.—Nūkshūtréshū, the lord of the planets.—Kshūpakūrū, he who illumines the night.

SECT. XVI.—*Mūngūlū^t, or Mars.*

THIS god is painted red; rides on a sheep; wears a red necklace, and garments of the same colour; and has four arms: in one hand he holds a weapon called shūktee; with another he is giving a blessing; with another forbidding fear; and in the fourth he holds a club.

‘If a person be born under the planet Mūngūlū, he will be full of anxious thoughts, be wounded with offensive weapons, be imprisoned, be oppressed with fear from robbers, fire, &c. and will lose his lands, trees, and good name.’—*Jyotish-tūtwū*.

SECT. XVII.—*Boodhū^u, or Mercury.*

THIS god has four arms; in one hand he holds the discus, in another a club, in another a scymitar, and with the

^r See a story of the birth of Boodhū in the following page.

^s Kūla is the one 16th part of the disk of the moon, viz. that quantity which it increases or decreases in one day.

^t Mūngūlū-varū, or Tuesday. Mūngūlū is also called Ungarūkū, or, he who travels; Koojū, the son of the earth; and Lohitangū, the blood-coloured.

^u Boodhū-varū, or Wednesday. The meaning of Boodhū is, the wise.

fourth is bestowing a blessing. He rides on a lion; is of a placid countenance; and wears yellow garments.

The following is an account of the birth of Boodhū:—On a certain occasion Vrihūspūtee, the spiritual guide of the gods, made a great feast, to which he invited all the gods. Chūndrū was present among the rest; who, during the festival, fell in love with Tara, the wife of Vrihūspūtee. Not knowing how to accomplish his wishes, after his return home he invited Vrihūspūtee to a sacrifice, begging him to bring his wife with him. Vrihūspūtee and his wife proceeded to the palace of Chūndrū, but saw no preparations for the sacrifice. The former expressing his surprise at this circumstance, Chūndrū told him that the sacrifice was unavoidably delayed, and advised him to return for a short time to his devotions, leaving his wife at his house. Vrihūspūtee consented, and during his absence Chūndrū dishonoured the wife of his spiritual guide; who on his return, finding his wife pregnant, cursed Chūndrū, and hurled him into the sea, where he continued like a cinder, leaving the earth in darkness for two kūlpūs, or 864,000,000 years. Vrihūspūtee compelled his wife to deliver herself, and, on the birth of the child Boodhū, reduced her to ashes. Brūmha afterwards raised her from her ashes, and, thus purified, Vrihūspūtee took her to his embraces again. Sūmoodrū, (the sea,) incensed at his son for this horrid crime of dishonouring the wife of his divine teacher, disinherited him. Chūndrū then applied to his sister Lūkshmēē^x, the wife of Vishnoo, by whose power part of his sin was re-

He is also called Rouhinéyū, the son of Rohinēē, and Soumyū, the son of Somū.

^x Lūkshmēē was born, like Chūndrū, at the churning of the sea by the gods.

moved, and he became light like the moon when three days old. She also applied in his behalf to Parvūtī, who resolved to restore Chūndrū to heaven, and for this purpose planted him in the forehead of her husband^y; who went, thus ornamented, to a feast of the gods. Vrihūspūtee, on seeing Chūndrū again in heaven, was greatly incensed, and could only be appeased by Brūmha's ordaining, that the lascivious god should be excluded from heaven, and placed among the stars; and that the sin by which his glory had been obscured should remain for ever. Chūndrū now asked Brūmha to remove the vomiting of blood, with which he had been seized since his fall from heaven; who directed him, as a certain cure, to hold a deer on his knees.

'If a person be born under the planet Boodhū, he will be very fortunate, obtain an excellent wife, &c.'—*Jyotish-tūtū*.



SECT. XVIII.—*Vrihūspūtee*^z, or *Jupiter*.

THE image of this god, the son of the sage Ūngira, is painted yellow. He sits on the water-lily; has four arms; in one hand he holds a roodrakshū bead-roll; in another an alms' dish; in another a club; and with the fourth he is bestowing a blessing.

Vrihūspūtee is preceptor and priest to the gods; in whose palaces he explains the védūs, and performs a number of religious ceremonies.

^y In Shivū's forehead is placed a half moon.

^z Vrihūspūti-varū, or Thursday.

If a person be born under the planet Vrihūspūtee, he will be endowed with an amiable disposition; possess palaces, gardens, lands, and be rich in money, corn, &c.; obtaining the affections of all, his honours will increase; he will possess much religious merit; and, in short, will have all his wishes gratified. Kshūtriyūs, Voishyūs, and Shōō-drūs, if born under this planet, will be prosperous and happy; but bramhūns will not be so fortunate: the reason given is, that Vrihūspūtee is a bramhūn, and therefore does not wish to exalt those of his own cast.—*Jyotish-tūtwū*.

This god is charged in the Mūhabharūtū with deflowering the wife of his eldest brother Ootūt'hyū.

Names. Vrihūspūtee, or, preceptor to the gods.—Soo-racharyū, the priest of the gods.—Gishpūtee, the eloquent.—Gooroo, the preceptor.—Jēēvū, he who revives the gods^a.—Angirūsū, the son of Ūngira.—Vachūspūtee, the lord of words, viz. the eloquent.



SECT. XIX.—*Shookrū*^b, or the Planet Venus.

THIS god, the son of the sage Bhrigoo, is dressed in white; sits on the water-lily; has four hands: in one he holds a roodrakshū bead-roll; in another an alms' dish; in another a club; and with the other is bestowing a blessing.

Shookrū is preceptor and officiating priest to the giants. He is represented as blind of one eye; the reason of which

^a That is, when the gods die in battle, Vrihūspūtee by incantations restores them to life.

^b Shookrū-varū, or Friday.

is thus related:—When Vamūnū went to king Būlee, to solicit a present, Shookrū, being Būlee's preceptor, forbade his giving him any thing. The king disregarding his advice, the priest was obliged to read the necessary formulas, and to pour out the water from a vessel, to ratify the gift. Shookrū, still anxious to withhold the gift, which he foresaw would be the destruction of his master, entered the water in an invisible form, and by his magic power prevented it from falling; but Vamūnū, aware of the device, put a straw into the basin of water, which entered Shookrū's eye, and gave him so much pain, that he leaped out of the basin: the water then fell, and the gift was offered.

‘If a person be born under the planet Shookrū, he will have the faculty of knowing things past, present, and future; will have many wives; have a kingly umbrella, (the emblem of royalty;) and other kings will worship him; he will possess elephants, horses, palanqueens, footmen, &c.’—*Jyotish-tūtwū*.

Shookrū's daughter, Dēvūjanēē, was deeply in love with one of her father's pupils, Kūchū, the son of Vrihūspūtee. This youth had been sent by his father to learn from Shookrū an incantation for raising the dead. One day Dēvūjanēē sent Kūchū to bring some flowers to be used in worship^c from a forest belonging to the giants. Previously to this, Kūchū had been devoured several times by different giants; but Shookrū by the above incantation had restored him to life: when he tore open the bellies of these cannibals, and destroyed them. The giants now resolved to make Shookrū himself eat this boy; for which purpose they caught him in the forest, cut him into the smallest

^c Gathering flowers for the worship of the gods is often at present the employment of young persons.

pieces, boiled him up in spirits, and invited Shookrū to the entertainment. Kūchū not returning from the forest, Dévūjanēē wept much, and told her father that she would certainly kill herself^d if he did not bring back her lover. Shookrū at length, by the power of meditation, discovered that he had eaten this youth, so beloved by his daughter; and he knew not how to bring him back to life, without the attempt being fatal to himself. At last, however, while the boy continued in his belly, he restored him to life, and taught him the incantation for raising the dead; after which Kūchū, tearing open Shookru's belly, came forth, and immediately restored his teacher to life. Kūchū, having obtained the knowledge of revivifying the dead, took leave of his preceptor, and was about to return to his father Vrihūspūtee, when Dévūjanēē insisted upon his marrying her. Kūchū declined this honour, as she was the daughter of his preceptor; at which she was so incensed that she pronounced a curse upon him, by which he was doomed to reap no advantage from all his learning. In return Kūchū cursed Dévūjanēē, and doomed her to marry a kshūtriyū; which curse after some time took effect, and she was married to king Yūjatee. After Dévūjanēē had borne two children, she discovered that the king maintained an illicit connection with a princess of the name of Sūmmisht'ha, by whom he had three sons. She appealed to her father Shookrū, who pronounced a curse on Yūjatee; when his hair immediately became grey, his teeth fell from his head, and he was seized with complete decrepitude. Yūjatee remonstrated with his father-in-law, and asked him who should live with his daughter, who was yet young, seeing that he had brought old age upon him. Shookrū replied,

^d The Hindoo children often resort to this threat to extort some favour from their parents.

that if he could persuade any one to take upon him this curse, he might still enjoy connubial felicity. Yūjatee returned home, and asked his eldest son by Dēvūjanēē to take this curse for a thousand years, and possess the kingdom; at the close of which time he should become young again, and continue in the kingdom: but this son, his brother, and the two eldest sons of Sūmmisht'ha refused the kingdom on these conditions; which so enraged the father, that he cursed them all. The youngest son, however, by Sūmmisht'ha accepted the conditions, and instantly became weak and decrepid; when the father assumed his former youth, and returned to the company of his wives.

Names. Shookrū, or, he who sorrows at the destruction of the giants.—Doityū-gooroo, preceptor to the giants.—Kavyū, the poet.—Ooshūna, the friend of the giants.—Bhargūvū, the descendant of Bhrigoo.



SECTION XX.—*Shūnee*^e, or *Saturn*.

THIS god is dressed in black; rides on a vulture^f; has four arms; in one he holds an arrow; in another a javelin;

^e Shūnee-varū, or Saturday. One of the names of Shūnee is Shūnoish-chūrū, viz. he who travels slowly.

^f This god is represented as sitting on this bird, probably, to denote his destructive power. Saturn, in the Grecian system of idolatry, was represented as devouring his children. The vultures in Bengal are highly useful in devouring the dead bodies of men and beasts, many of which are left in the roads and on the banks of rivers. It is astonishing how swiftly these birds collect wherever a dead body falls, though one of them should not have been seen in the place for weeks or months before; illustrating, in the most striking manner, the words of our Lord, "Wheresoever the carcase is, there will the vultures be gathered together." *Matt.* xxiv. 28.

in another a bow; and with the other is giving a blessing. He is said to be the son of Sōōryū by Chaya.

All the Hindoos exceedingly dread the supposed baneful influence of this god, and perform a number of ceremonies to appease him. Many stories of him are to be found in the writings of the Hindoos, such as that of his burning off the head of Gūneshū; his burning Dūshūrūt'hū's chariot in his descent from heaven; his giving rise to bad harvests, ill fortune, &c.

‘If a person be born under the planet Shūnee,’ says the Jyotish-tūtūwū, ‘he will be slandered, his riches dissipated, his son, wife, and friends destroyed; he will live at variance with others; and endure many sufferings.’ The Hindoos are under constant fear of bad fortune from this planet. Some persons, if absent from home at the time of his appearance, return through fear, and others forsake their business lest they should meet with misfortunes. If one person persecute another, the latter sometimes takes it patiently, supposing it to arise from the bad fortune which naturally springs from the influence of this star. The Hindoos believe that when Shūnee is in the ninth stellar mansion, the most dreadful evils befall mankind: hence when Ramū broke the bow of Shivū, which was the condition of obtaining Sēēta in marriage, and when the earth sunk, and the waters of the seven seas were united in one, Pūrūshoo-ramū, startled at the noise of the bow, exclaimed, ‘Ah! some one has laid hold of the hood of the snake, or fallen under the ninth of Shūnee.’ At present, when a person is obstinate, and will not hearken to reason, a by-stander says, ‘I suppose he has fallen upon Shūnee, or he has laid his hand upon the hood of the snake, viz. he is embracing his own destruction.’ When Ramū found that

some one had stolen Sēēta, in the midst of his rage he exclaimed, ‘ This person must have been born when Shūnee was in the ninth mansion.’



SECTION XXI.—*Rahoo*^h.

THIS god, the son of Singhika, is painted black: he rides on a lion; has four arms, in three of which he holds a scymitar, a spear, and a shield, and with the other hand is bestowing a blessing.

‘ If a person be born under the planet Rahoo,’ says the work already quoted, ‘ his wisdom, riches, and children will be destroyed; he will be exposed to many afflictions, and be subject to his enemies.’

Rahoo was originally a giant, but at the churning of the sea he took his present name and form; (that is, he became one of the heavenly bodiesⁱ;) which transformation is thus described in the pooranūs:—At the time when the gods churned the sea to obtain the water of life, Sōōryū (the sun) and Chūndrū (the moon) were sitting together. When the nectar came up, these gods hinted to Vishnoo, that one of the company who had drank of the nectar was not a god, but one of the giants. Vishnoo immediately cut off his head; but after drinking the water of life, neither the

^h The ascending node.

ⁱ We are here reminded of Jupiter’s deflowering Calisto, the daughter of Lycaon, king of Arcadia. It will be remembered, that when her disgrace became known, Juno turned her into a bear, which Jupiter afterwards advanced into heaven, and made it a constellation, now called Ursa major.

head nor the trunk could perish. The head taking the name of Rahoo, and the trunk that of Kétoo, were placed in the heavens as the ascending and descending nodes; and leave was granted, by way of revenge on Sōōryū and Chūndrū, that on certain occasions Rahoo should approach these gods, and make them unclean, so that their bodies should become thin and black. The popular opinion, however, is, that, at the time of an eclipse, Rahoo swallows the sun and moon, and vomits them up again^k.

Many persons perform a number of ceremonies on these occasions, as, those to the manes; pouring out water to deceased ancestors; repeating the names of the gods; setting up gods; making offerings, &c. The Jyotish-tūtūwū declares, that performing these duties now is attended with benefits infinitely greater than at other times. Nobody must discharge the fæces or urine, or eat any food, until they have seen the sun or moon after the eclipse, though it be till their rising the next day. He who does not observe this law, will have a million of hells in one.

Names. Tūmū, the dark, or, he who is possessed of a great proportion of the quality of darkness.—Rahoo, he

^k It is a most unaccountable coincidence in the notions of remote nations, that the Chinese and the Greenlanders, as well as the Hindoos, should think that the sun or the moon is devoured at the time of an eclipse. "As soon as they (the Chinese) perceive that the sun or moon begins to be darkened, they throw themselves on their knees, and knock their foreheads against the earth. A noise of drums and cymbals is immediately heard throughout the whole city. This is the remains of an ancient opinion entertained in China, that by such a horrid din they assisted the suffering luminary, and prevented it from being devoured by the celestial dragon." Crantz in his History of Greenland asserts, that a similar custom exists among this people, who could certainly never have learnt it either from the Hindoos or the Chinese.

who swallows and afterwards vomits up the sun or moon.—Swürbhanoo, he who shines in the heavens.—Soinghikéyü, the son of Singhika.—Vidhoontoodü, he who afflicts the moon.



SECTION XXII.—*Kétoo*¹.

KEROO is the headless trunk of Rahoo, which became immortal at the churning of the sea. This god is painted of a light green colour. He rides on a vulture; in one hand holds a club, and with the other is bestowing a blessing.



THE preceding may be called the Hindoo **CÆLESTIAL GODS**. I dare not say, that I have given every deity of this order, as I have not found any book containing an exact list of them. I could easily have enlarged the number, by inserting accounts of other forms of these gods; but this would have swelled the work, without adding to its value,

¹ The descending node,

CHAP. III.

OF THE GODDESSES.

SECT. I.—*Doorga*.

IN those parts of the Hindoo shastrŭs which treat of the production of the world, this goddess is spoken of as the female power, under the name of Prŭkritēē or Bhŭgŭvŭtēē. She was first born in the house of Dukshŭ, one of the progenitors of mankind, and called Sŭtēē; under which name she was married to Shivŭ, but renounced her life on hearing her father reproach her husband. On her second appearance, we recognize her under the name of Parvŭtēē, the daughter of Himalŭyŭ^a; when she was again married to Shivŭ, by whom she had two children, Kartikéyŭ and Gŭnēshŭ.

Doorga has had many births to destroy the giants^b. The reason of her being called Doorga is thus given in the Kashēē-khŭndŭ:—On a certain occasion Ūgŭstyŭ, the sage, asked Kartikéyŭ, why Parvŭtēē, his mother, was called Doorga. Kartikéyŭ replied, that formerly a giant named Doorgŭ, the son of Rooroo, having performed religious austerities in honour of Brŭmha, obtained his blessing, and became a great oppressor: he conquered the three worlds, and dethroned Indrŭ, Vayoo, Chŭndrŭ, Yŭmŭ, Ūgnee, Vŭ-roonŭ, Koovérŭ, Bŭlee, Eēshanŭ, Roodrŭ, Sŭōryŭ, the eight Vŭsoos, &c. The wives of the rishees were compelled to

^a The mountain of this name.

^b Sir W. Jones, not improperly, considers Doorga as bearing a pretty strong resemblance to Juno, as well as to Minerva.

celebrate his praises. He sent all the gods from their heavens to live in forests; and at his nod they came and worshipped him. He abolished all religious ceremonies; the bramhūns, through fear of him, forsook the reading of the védūs; the rivers changed their courses; fire lost its energy; and the terrified stars retired from sight: he assumed the forms of the clouds, and gave rain whenever he pleased; the earth through fear gave an abundant increase; and the trees yielded flowers and fruits out of season. The gods at length applied to Shivū. Indrū said, 'He has dethroned me;'—Sōōryū said, 'He has taken my kingdom:' and thus all the gods related their misfortunes. Shivū, pitying their case, desired Parvūtēē to go and destroy the giant. She willingly accepting of the commission, calmed the fears of the gods, and first sent Kalū-ratree, a female whose beauty bewitched the inhabitants of the three worlds, to order the giant to restore things to their ancient order. The latter, full of fury, sent some soldiers to lay hold of Kalū-ratree; but, by the breath of her mouth, she reduced them to ashes. Doorgū then sent 30,000 other giants, who were such monsters in size that they covered the surface of the earth. Among them were the following: Doordhūrū^c, Doormookhū^d, Khūrū^e, Shirū-panee^f, Pashū-panee^g, Sooréndrū^h, Dūmūnūⁱ, Hūnoo^k, Yūgnūhaneē^l, Khūrgū-roma^m, Oograsyūⁿ, Dēvū-kūmpūnū^o, &c. At the sight of these giants, Kalū-ratree fled through the air to Parvūtēē, and the giants followed her. Doorgū, with 100,000,000 chariots, 200 ūrvoodūs (or 120,000,000,000) of elephants, 10,000,000 of swift-footed horses, and innu-

^c Difficult to catch. ^d Foul-mouthed. ^e Cruel. ^f Holding a human skull in the hand. ^g Wielders of the pashū. ^h Sovereigns of the gods. ⁱ Bullies. ^k Of high cheek bones. ^l Sacrifice-destroyers. ^m They whose hair is like scymitars. ⁿ Of terrific countenance. ^o They who make the gods tremble.

merable soldiers, went to fight with Parvūtēē on the mountain Vindhū. As soon as the giant drew near, Parvūtēē assumed 1000 arms, and called to her a sistance different kinds of beings, as jūmbhū^p, mūhajūmbhū^q, vijūmbhū^r, vikū anānū^s, pingakshū^t, mūhishū^u, mūhogrū^x, ūtyoogrū^y, vigrūhū^z, krōōrakshū^a, krodhūnū^b, krūndūnū^c, sūnkrūndūnū^d, mūha-bhūyū^e, jitantūkū^f, mūha-vahoo^g, mūha-vūkrū^h, mūhēēdhūrūⁱ, doondoobhū^k, doondoobhirūvū^l, mūha-doondoo-bhinasikū^m, oograsūyūⁿ, dēērgū-dushūnū^o, méghū-késhū^p, vrikanūnū^q, singhasūyū^r, shōōkurū-mookhū^s, shiva-rūvū-mūhotkūtū^t, shookūt-oondū^u, prāchūndasūyū^x, bhēēmakshū^y, kshoodrū-manūsū^z, oolōōkūnētrū^a, kūnūkasyū^b, kakūtoondū^c, khūrūnūkhū^d, dēērgūgrēēvū^e, mūhajūnghū^f, shiroddhūrū^g, rūktū-vrindū-jūvanētrū^h, vidyootjivhūⁱ, ūgninētrūkū^k, tapūnū^l, dhōōmrakshū^m, dhoomūnishwasūⁿ, shoorū-chūndangshoo-tapūnū^o, mūhabhēēshūnū-mookhū^p, &c. She also brought a number of weapons out of her body, as ūsee^q, chūkrū^r, bhooshoondēē^s, gūda^t, moodgūrū^u, tomūrū^x, bhindipalū^y, pūrighū^z,

- ^p Malicious. ^q Very malicious. ^r In various ways malicious.
^s Of fear-exciting countenance. ^t Of yellow eyes. ^u Like buffaloes.
^x Wrathful. ^y Exceedingly wrathful. ^z Warriors. ^a Cruel-eyed.
^b Wrathful. ^c Causers of crying. ^d Causing to cry excessively.
^e Fear-exciting. ^f Death-conquering. ^g Large-armed. ^h Large-faced.
ⁱ Mountain-like. ^k Noisy like the doondoobhee. ^l Ditto.
^m With noses like the doondoobhee. ⁿ With wrathful countenance.
^o Long-toothed. ^p With hair like clouds. ^q Leopard-faced.
^r Lion-faced. ^s Pig-faced. ^t Exciting terrors by making sounds like the jackal.
^u With bills like a parrot. ^x Terrible-faced.
^y Terrific-eyed. ^z Little-minded. ^a Owl-eyed. ^b Gold-faced.
^c Crow-faced. ^d Sharp-nailed. ^e Long-necked. ^f Long-thighed.
^g Large-veined. ^h With eyes red like the yūva flower. ⁱ With tongues like lightning.
^k Fiery-eyed. ^l Inflamers. ^m Smoke-eyed.
ⁿ With breath like smoke. ^o Giving pain to the sun and moon. ^p Of horrid countenance.
^q A scymitar. ^r A discus. ^s A hatchet.
^t A bludgeon or club. ^u A hammer. ^x An iron crow. ^y A short arrow. ^z A bludgeon.

koontū^a, shūlyū^b, shūktee^c, ūrdhū-chūndrū^d, kshoorūprū^e, narachū^f, shilēemookhū^g, mūhabhūllū^h, pūrūshooⁱ, bhi-doorū^k, and mūrmūbhédū^l. The troops of the giant poured their arrows on Parvūtēē, sitting on the mountain Vindhū, thick as the drops of rain in a storm; they even tore up the trees, the mountains, &c. and hurled at the goddess; who however threw a weapon which carried away many of the arms of the giant: when he, in return, hurled a flaming dart at the goddess; which she turning aside, he discharged another; but this also she resisted by a hundred arrows. He next let fly an arrow at Parvūtēē's breast; but this too she repelled, as well as two other instruments, a club and a pike. At last Parvūtēē seized Doorgū, and set her left foot on his breast; but he disengaged himself, and renewed the fight. The beings (9,000,000) whom Parvūtēē caused to issue from her body then destroyed all the soldiers of the giant; in return Doorgū caused a dreadful shower of hail to descend, the effect of which Parvūtēē counteracted by an instrument called shoshūnū^m. He next, breaking off the peak of a mountain, threw it at Parvūtēē, who cut it into seven pieces by her arrows. The giant now assumed the shape of an elephant as large as a mountain, and approached the goddess; but she tied his legs, and with her nails, which were like scymitars, tore him to pieces. He then arose in the form of a buffalo, and with his horns cast stones, trees, and mountains at the goddess, tearing up the trees by the breath of his nostrils. The goddess next pierced him with her trident, when he reeled to and fro, and, renouncing the form of the buffalo, assumed his ori-

^a A bearded dart. ^b A javelin. ^c Another. ^d An arrow like a half-moon. ^e A weapon like a spade. ^f A small arrow. ^g A round arrow. ^h A very long spear. ⁱ A hatchet like a half-moon. ^k A thunderbolt full of spikes. ^l A bearded arrow. ^m A weapon which dries up liquids.

ginal body as a giant, with a thousand arms, and weapons in each. Going up to Parvūtēē, the goddess seized him by his thousand arms, and carried him into the air, from whence she threw him down with dreadful force. Perceiving however that this had no effect, she pierced him in the breast with an arrow; when the blood issued in streams from his mouth, and he expired. The gods were now filled with joy: Sōōryū, Chūndrū, Ūgnee, &c. obtained their former splendour; and all the other deities, who had been dethroned by this giant, immediately reascended their thrones; the bramhūns resumed the study of the védūs; sacrifices were regularly performed, and every thing assumed its pristine state: the heavens rang with the praises of Parvūtēē, and the gods, in return for so signal a deliverance, honoured her with the name of Doorga.

Mūhishū, king of the giants, at a certain period overcame the gods in war, and reduced them to such a state of indigence, that they were seen wandering about the earth like common beggars. Indrū, after a time, collected them together, and they went in a body to Brūmha, and afterwards to Shivū, but met with no redress. At last they applied to Vishnoo, who was so enraged at beholding their wretchedness, that streams of glory issued from his face, from which sprang a female named Mūha-maya (Doorga). Streams of glory issued also from the faces of the other gods, and entering Mūha-maya, she became a body of glory resembling a mountain on fire. The gods then gave their weapons to this female, and, with a frightful scream, she ascended into the air.

[The work Chūndēē, in this place, contains a long account of the dreadful contest betwixt Mūha-maya and this giant, which ended in the destruction of the latter.]

After the victory the gods chanted the praises of Mūhāmāyā; and the goddess, pleased with their gratitude, promised to succour them whenever they were in distress, and then disappeared.

The Hindoos believe that the worship of Doorga has been performed through the four yoogūs; but that Soorūtū, a king, in the end of the dwapūrū-yoogū, made known the present form of worshipping the goddess, and celebrated these orgies in the month Choitrū; (hence called the Vāsūntee, or spring festival.) Soorūtū offered a very great number of goats, sheep, and buffaloes to Doorga; believing, according to the shastrū, that he should enjoy happiness in heaven as many years as there were hairs upon the different animals offered. After his death, however, his case excited much discussion in the court of Yūmū; who at length decided, that though Soorūtū had much merit, he had destroyed the lives of many animals, and that he must be born and suffer death from all these beasts assembled in one place, when he should immediately be advanced to heaven. Others interpret this passage of the shastrū as meaning, that the king was to assume in succession the forms of all these beasts, and be put to death in each form before he could ascend to heaven. In the trētū-yoogū Ramū is said to have performed the worship of Doorga in the month Ashwinū; and from him it is continued in this month, and called the Sharū-dēēya, or autumnal festival.

This festival, celebrated in the month Ashwinū, the most popular of all the annual festivals held in Bengal, I shall now attempt to describe. Immense sums are expended upon itⁿ; all business throughout the country is

ⁿ In the city of Calcutta alone, it is supposed, upon a moderate calcu-

laid aside for several days, and universal festivity and licentiousness prevail. A short time before the festival, the learned men and sirkars^o employed in Calcutta a'most universally return home; some of them enjoy a holiday of several weeks.

The image of Doorga has ten arms. In one of her right hands is a spear, with which she is piercing the giant Mūhishū; with one of the left she holds the tail of a serpent, and the hair of the giant, whose breast the serpent is biting. Her other hands are all stretched behind her head, and filled with different instruments of war. Against her right leg leans a lion, and against her left the above giant.—The images of Lākshmēē, Sūrūswūtēē, Kartikéyū, and Gūnēshū, are very frequently made and placed by the side of this goddess.

On the 9th day of the decrease of the moon this festival begins, when the ceremony called sūnkūlpū is performed, by the officiating bramhūn's taking into his joined hands a metal kosha, (which contains water, flowers, fruits, sesamum, rice, and a blade of kooshū grass,) reading an incantation, and promising that on the succeeding days such a person will perform the worship of Doorga. After this, Doorga is worshipped before a pan of water with the accustomed formularies.

On the 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th, 14th, and 15th days of the festival, that half a million sterling is expended annually on this festival. About fifty years ago (1811) Kūndūrpū-goorū, a kaist'hū, expended in this worship 38,000 pounds, and spent 12,500 pounds annually as long as he lived in the same manner.

^o Natives who direct the business of Europeans are commonly called sirkars. The proper name is Mootsūddee, or Moolhūree.

the moon, the same ceremonies are performed before the pan of water; and, with some trifling variations in the offerings, continued on the 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th, and 20th.

On the 21st day of the moon, at the close of the worship, what is called ūdhivasū is performed. This also is a preliminary ceremony, and consists in taking rice, fruits, &c. and touching with them a pan of water, and afterwards the forehead of the image, at intervals repeating incantations.

On the 22d, early in the morning, the officiating bramhūn consecrates the image, placing it on the spot prepared for it in the temple, and repeating the proper formulas. After this the principal ceremonies before the image begin. First, the business of giving eyes and life to the images is performed; when they become objects of worship. In this curious ceremony, the officiating bramhūn touches with the two fore-fingers of his right hand the breast, the two cheeks, the eyes, and the forehead of the image. When he touches these places he says, 'Let the soul of Doorga long continue in happiness in this image.' After this, he takes a leaf of the vilwū tree, rubs it with clarified butter, and holds it over a burning lamp till it be covered with soot; of which he takes a little on the stalk of another vilwū leaf, and touches the eyes, filling up with the soot a small white place left in the pupil of the eye.

The worship of Gūnēshū and other gods is now performed; then that of the demi-goddesses, the companions of Doorga in her wars, who are represented by the dots of paint on the canopy which covers the image of the goddess. The offerings presented to them consist of very small slices of plantains, on each of which are stuck two or three grains of rice, &c. Then follows the worship of the other images

set up with that of Doorga; to which succeeds the principal worship, that of Doorga. First, the officiating bramhūn performs dhyanū; in which, sitting before the image, he closes his eyes, and repeats the proper formulas, meditating on the form of the goddess, and repeating to himself, 'I present to the goddess all these flowers, fruits, &c. [here he goes over all the offerings;] I slay all these animals,' &c. He then calls the goddess, saying, 'O goddess, come here, come here; stay here, stay here. Take up thine abode here, and receive my worship.' The priest next places before the image a small piece of square gold or silver, for the goddess to sit upon, and asks if she has arrived happily; adding the answer himself, 'Very happily.' After this water for washing the feet is offered, by taking it with a spoon from one vessel, and pouring it out into another, while the incantation is repeated. Ten or fifteen blades of dōōrvū grass, a yūva flower, sandal powder, rice, &c. are then offered with an incantation, and laid at the feet of Doorga. Next follows water to wash the mouth; curds, sugar, and a lighted lamp. Then water to wash the mouth, and to bathe; then cloth, or garments; then jewels, or ornaments for the feet, arms, fingers, nose, ears, &c. with sandal wood, and red or white lead; then flowers of different kinds, one at a time, with a separate incantation for each flower; also a vilwū leaf, with some powder of sandal wood put upon it. Then are offered thrice successively two handfuls of flowers of different kinds; afterwards incense, a lighted lamp, and meat offerings. At the close, the bramhūn walks round the image seven times, repeating forms of petition and praise.

Now the bloody sacrifices are offered. If the animal be a sheep or a goat, as is always the case on the first day, the officiating bramhūn, after bathing it either in the river or

in the house, puts his left hand on its forehead, marks its horns and forehead with red lead, and reads an incantation, in which he offers it up to the goddess thus: 'O goddess, I sacrifice this goat^p to thee, that I may live in thy heaven to the end of ten years.' He then reads an incantation in its ear, and puts flowers, and sprinkles water, on its head. The instrument with which the animal is killed is consecrated by placing upon it flowers, red lead, &c. and writing on it the incantation which is given to the disciples of Doorga. The officiating bramhūn next puts the instrument of death on the neck of the animal, and, after presenting him with a flower as a blessing^q, then into the hand of the person appointed to slay the animal, who is generally the blacksmith^r, but sometimes a bramhūn. The assistants put the goat's neck into an upright post, excavated at the top so as to admit the neck betw^xt its two sides; the body remaining on one side of the post, and the head on the other. An earthen vessel containing a plantain is placed upon a plantain leaf; after which the blacksmith cuts off the head at one blow, and another person holds up the body, and drains out the blood upon the plantain in the bason. If the person who performs the sacrifice does not intend to offer the flesh to Doorga^s, the slayer cuts only a small morsel from the neck, and puts it on the plantain; when some one carries it,

^p Only male animals are offered.

^q It is common among the Hindoos for a superior to give a blessing while presenting a flower.

^r The Hindoos covet the honour of cutting off the head of an animal dexterously at the time of these sacrifices. If it be not done at one blow, they drive the blacksmith away in disgrace. The shastrūs have denounced vengeance on the person who shall fail to cut off the head at one blow: his son will die, or the goddess of fortune (Lūkshmēē) will forsake him.

^s This is rarely or never done at present. There are no parts of the animal, however, which may not be offered.

and the head, and places them before the image, putting on the head a lighted lamp. After all the animals have been thus killed, and some of the flesh and the heads carried before the image, the officiating bramhūn repeats certain prayers over these offerings, and presents them to the goddess, with the blood which fell on the plantains: then, taking the blood from the bason, he puts it on a plantain leaf, and cuts it into four parts, presenting it to the four goddesses who attend upon Doorga.

Offerings of rice, plantains, sugar, sweetmeats, sour milk, curds, pulse of different sorts, limes, fruits, &c. are next presented with prayers. Now the names of Doorga are repeated by the priest, who afterwards presents camphorated water to the goddess; then betle-nut, limes, spices, &c. made into what is called panũ^t. After repeating a number of forms of praise, this part of the service closes with the prostration of the officiating bramhūn before the idol. Next, food is presented with many prayers to the goddess; which food consists of what is called khéchūrũ^u, fried fruits, fried fish and flesh, &c. About four in the afternoon, large quantities of food are presented to the goddess; amongst which are, prepared greens of three or four kinds; prepared peas of three or four kinds; fried fruits, sweet potatoes, &c.; fried fish, mixed with fruits of four or five different sorts; the flesh of sheep and goats, stewed in two or three ways; preparations of tamarinds, two or three sorts; rice boiled in milk, two or three sorts; fifteen or sixteen sorts of sweetmeats, &c.; all which are offered with separate prayers: after which water, betle, &c. are presented.

^t Chewed by almost all the natives.

^u A common dish in Bengal, made of rice, boiled up with turmeric, pease, spices, clarified butter, &c.

The bramhūns are entertained either with sweetmeats, or prepared food, by the person at whose house the worship is performed: some of them are expressly invited, and others attend to see the ceremonies. The food which has been presented to the goddess, being considered almost as ambrosia, is given to the guests with a sparing hand; some of whom (mothers) beg to take a morsel home to cure their children, or relatives, of diseases. Food is also sent to the neighbours, and persons of inferior cast carry away great quantities^x.

In the evening the officiating bramhūn waves a brass candlestick, or lamp with five lights, before the goddess, repeating incantations; afterwards a shell with water in it, and then a piece of cloth. At night the temple is lighted up, and, about eight o'clock, unleavened bread, butter, fruits, sweetmeats, curds, milk, &c. are presented to the goddess. At midnight some persons repeat the worship; but in this case the offerings are few, and there are no bloody sacrifices.

After the worship of the day, many rich men engage a number of prostitutes, richly dressed and almost covered with ornaments, to dance and sing before the idol. The songs are exceedingly obscene; the dances highly indecent; and the dress of the dancing women no less so; their clothing being so fine as scarcely to deserve the name of a covering. The tresses of some are thrown loose, hanging down to the waist. During the dances, the doors are shut

^x In some places a family or several families of bramhūns are supported by the revenues attached to a temple, and by the offerings presented to the idol. At the time of a festival the heads of these families wait on those who come to make offerings to the idol, and present them with betle, sweetmeats, fruits, water, &c. according to their quality.

to keep out the crowd, as well as Europeans, who are carefully excluded. Six, seven, or eight women thus dance together, assisted by music, for about four hours. Rich spectators, when remarkably pleased with a part of the song, throw to the singer as much as four, eight, or sixteen roopees; beside which, those who engage these women make them presents of garments, and of considerable sums of money. The sons of the rich natives are highly pleased with these dances.

On the second day, the worship and sacrifices are much the same as on the first, except that the bathing of the goddess, called the great *snanũ*, is attended with more ceremonies. In this ceremony the priest first brings some earth said to have been thrown up by the teeth of a wild hog, and, mixing it with water, presents it with prayers to the goddess, to be used as soap. Then in succession earth from before the door of the king, or lord of the soil; from before that of a courtesan; from the side of the Ganges; earth raised by ants; and, lastly, earth from any river side, not the Ganges, is presented with the same ceremonies. After this, turmeric, fruits, and spices; the water of the cocoa-nut, and of the water melon; the juice of the sugar cane; honey, clarified butter, sour milk, milk, cow's urine, cow-dung, sugar, treacle, and different sorts of oil, are presented in succession, with the necessary formulas. While the officiating *bramhũn* is going through these ceremonies, he revolves in his mind that he is making these gifts to assist the goddess in bathing. At the close, he presents some water of the Ganges, and after this the water of four seas; or, if unable to obtain this, the water of the Ganges again, and then the water of some other river. The bathing ceremonies are closed by a present of cloth for the loins. In the evening, or else in the night, according

to the conjunction of the stars, worship is again performed, in which only one bloody sacrifice is offered; and in some cases none. Widows fast on this day, particularly a widow with children; the latter deriving great benefits from the meritorious actions of the mother.

On the third day, the goddess is worshipped only once, but the offerings and sacrifices are many; buffaloes are offered only on this day. A respectable native once told me, he had seen one hundred and eight buffaloes sacrificed by one Hindoo at this festival: the number slain in the whole country must therefore be very great. Formerly some of the Hindoo kings killed a thousand animals on these occasions^y. The males only are sacrificed; and they are in general young and very tame, costing from five to sixteen roopees each. None of the Hindoos eat the sacrificed buffaloes, except the shoemakers^z. Each animal is bathed before it is slain; after which the officiating bramhūn puts red lead on its horns, and, with a red string, ties a piece of wool smeared with red lead on the forepart of the

^y The father of the present king of Nūdēeya, at one of these festivals, offered a great number of goats and sheep to Doorga. He began with one, and, doubling the number each day, continued it for sixteen days. On the last day he killed 33,768, and in the whole he slaughtered 65,535 animals. He loaded boats with the bodies, and sent them to the neighbouring bramhūns; but they could not devour them fast enough, and great numbers were thrown away.—Let no one, after this, tell us of the scruples of the bramhūns about destroying animal life, and eating animal food.

^z In some places the tame hog is offered to Doorga by the lowest cast, who, among other offerings, present spirituous liquors to the goddess. At the end of the ceremonies, these persons cook and eat the flesh, drink the spirits, and then, in a state of intoxication, the men and women dance together, and commit the greatest indecencies. No bramhūn, on pain of losing cast, can assist at these ceremonies; and indeed all bramhūns, who perform ceremonies for persons of low cast, sink in society.

breast; he also puts a piece of cloth coloured over with turmeric on his back, and a necklace of vilwā leaves on his neck, repeating prayers during these actions. The ceremony of cutting off the heads of the buffaloes, and presenting them to the goddess, is similar to those already described respecting the sacrifice of goats and sheep.

After the beasts are all slain, the multitude; rich and poor, daub their bodies all over with the mud formed with the blood which has collected where the animals were slain, and dance like furies on the spot; after which they go into the street, dancing and singing indecent songs, and visit those houses where images of the goddess have been set up.

At the close of the whole, the officiating bramhūn presents a burnt-offering, and gives to the goddess a sum of money, commonly about four roopees: some indeed give one hundred, and others as much as a thousand roopees; which at length return into the hands of the officiating bramhūn.

In the year 1806, I was present at the worship of this goddess, as performed at the house of Raja Raj-Krishnū at Calcutta. The buildings where the festival was held were on four sides, leaving an area in the middle. The room to the east contained wine, English sweetmeats, &c. for the entertainment of English guests, with a native Portuguese or two to wait on the visitors. In the opposite room was placed the image, with vast heaps of all kinds of offerings before it. In the two side rooms were the native guests, and in the area groups of Hindoo dancing women, finely dressed, singing, and dancing with sleepy steps, surrounded with Europeans who were sitting on chairs and couches. One or two groups of Mūsūlman men-singers entertained

the company at intervals with Hindoost'hanee songs, and ludicrous tricks. Before two o'clock the place was cleared of the dancing girls, and of all the Europeans except ourselves; and almost all the lights were extinguished, except in front of the goddess;—when the doors of the area were thrown open, and a vast crowd of natives rushed in, almost treading one upon another; among whom were the vocal singers, having on long caps like sugar loaves. The area might be about fifty cubits long and thirty wide. When the crowd had sat down, they were so wedged together as to present the appearance of a solid pavement of heads; a small space only being left immediately before the image for the motions of the singers, who all stood up. Four sets of singers were present on this occasion, the first consisting of bramhūns, the next of bankers, the next of voishnūvūs, and the last of weavers^a; who entertained their guests with filthy songs, and danced in indecent attitudes before the goddess, holding up their hands, turning round, putting forward their heads towards the image, every now and then bending their bodies, and almost tearing their throats with their vociferations. The whole scene produced on my mind sensations of the greatest horror. The dress of the singers—their indecent gestures—the abominable nature of the songs—the horrid din of their miserable drum—the lateness of the hour—the darkness of the place—with the reflection that I was standing in an idol temple, and that this immense multitude of rational and immortal creatures, capable of superior joys, were, in the very act of worship, perpetrating a crime of high treason against the God of heaven, while they themselves believed they were performing an act of merit—

^a Distinguished among the natives by the name of Hūroo-t'hakoorū, Bhūvanūdū, Nitāce, and Lūkshmēc.

excited ideas and feelings in my mind which time can never obliterate.

I would have given, in this place, a specimen of the songs sung before the image, but found them so full of broad obscenity that I could not copy a single line. All those actions, which a sense of decency keeps out of the most indecent English songs, are here detailed, sung, and laughed at, without the least sense of shame. A poor ballad-singer in England would be sent to the house of correction, and flogged, for performing the *meritorious actions* of these wretched idolaters^b. The singing is continued for three days, from about two o'clock in the morning till nine.

The next morning, between eight and nine, a short time is spent in worship, but no bloody sacrifices are offered. Amongst other ceremonies at this time the officiating bramhūn, in the presence of the family, dismisses the goddess, repeating these words: 'O goddess! I have, to the best of my ability, worshipped thee. Now go to thy residence, leaving this blessing, that thou wilt return the next year:' after which the priest immerses a looking-glass, the representative of the goddess, in a pan of water; and then takes some of this water, and sprinkles himself and the company with it. When the goddess is thus dismissed, the women set up a cry—some even shed tears. In the afternoon the mistress of the house and other women go to the image, put a roopee and some betle in its hand, strew some turmeric at its feet, and rub the dust of its feet on their own foreheads and those of their friends. On their retiring, the

^b The reader will recollect that the festivals of Bacchus and Cybele were equally noted for the indecencies practised by the worshippers, both in their words and actions.

crowd assemble, with their bodies daubed with turmeric, oil, and sour milk; and, bringing out the image, place it on a stage, to which they fasten it with cords, and carry it on their shoulders to the water. It is here placed in the centre of two boats lashed together, and filled with people, among whom are dancers, musicians, singers, &c. At this time, in many instances, men dance stark naked on the boat before many thousands assembled, who only laugh at this gross indecency. Perhaps in one place on the river twenty or thirty images will be exhibited at once, while the banks are crowded with spectators rich and poor, old and young, all intoxicated with the scene^c. The last ceremony is that of letting down the image, with all its tinsel and ornaments, into the river.

The women of the house to which the temple belongs go to the room from whence the goddess has just been taken, and place a pan of water upon the spot where the image stood, and put upon the top of the pan a branch of the mango tree. After the goddess has been drowned, the crowd return to the temple; and the officiating bramhün, taking his place by the side of the pan of water, dips the

^c In a memorandum of my own, dated Sept. 26, 1803, I find these remarks, made one evening in the course of a journey:—‘About five in the afternoon we came to Bülargür. The people of about twenty villages, more than 2000 in number, including women and children, were assembled to throw their images into the river, this being the termination of the Doorga festival. I observed that one of the men standing before the idol in a boat, dancing and making indecent gestures, was naked. As the boat passed along, he was gazed at by the mob; nor could I perceive that this abominable action produced any thing beside laughter. Before other images young men, dressed in women’s clothes, were dancing with other men, making indecent gestures. I cannot help thinking the most vulgar mob in England would have turned with disgust from these abominable scenes. I have seen the same abominations exhibited before our own house at Serampore.’

branch of the mango tree into the water, and sprinkles it on the people, repeating incantations; and thus blessing the people they are dismissed, when each one clasps his neighbour in his arms. Adjourning to their own houses, they partake of sweetmeats, and of an intoxicating beverage made with hemp leaves. In a vast number of instances this festival is thus closed with scenes of the most shameful intoxication: almost all the Hindoos in Bengal think it duty to indulge to a certain degree in drinking this liquor at this festival.

Presents to the bramhūns and their wives are made on each of the fifteen days of the festival by the person at whose house the image is set up, if he be very rich. If he be not rich enough to bear so great an expense, he gives presents on the nine or three last days of worship; and if he be still poorer, on the last day. These presents consist of gold and silver female ornaments, silk and cloth garments, brass and other metal dishes, basons, &c. Some persons expend the greatest sums on the dances and other exhibitions, and others in feasting and giving presents to bramhūns.

Some classes of Hindoos, especially those who are the disciples of Vishnoo, do not offer bloody sacrifices to Door-ga, though they celebrate this festival with much shew. These persons, instead of slaying animals, cut pumkins in two, or some other substitute, and offer them to the goddess.

In the month Choitrū a number of Hindoos hold a festival to this goddess, after the example of king Soorūtū.

Many Hindoos are initiated into the rites by which this

goddess becomes their guardian deity; and as she is considered as the image of the divine energy, her disciples are called Shaktūs; a word signifying energy.

Images of Doorga, made of gold, silver, brass, &c. are preserved by many, and worshipped daily.

In the year 1808, a bramhūn of Calcutta, who had celebrated the worship of Doorga, pretended that he had seen the goddess in a dream; who had declared that she would not descend into the river till he had sacrificed his eldest son to her: and that when the people went to convey the image to the river, it was found so heavy that it could not be lifted. Vast crowds of people flocked to see this new miracle, many of whom made offerings to this terror-inspiring goddess; and others assisted the poor man, by their contributions, to pacify the goddess in some way consistent with the preservation of his son.

One of the Tūntrūs contains an account of an incarnation of Doorga in the form of a jackal, in order to carry the child Krishnū over the river Yūmoono, when he was flying from king Kūngsū. Some of the heterodox Hindoos, called vama-charēēs, feed the jackal daily, by placing the offerings in a corner of the house, or near their dwellings, and then calling the goddess (in the form of some one of these animals) to come and partake of them. As this is done at the hour when the jackals come out of their lurking places to seek for food, one of these animals sometimes comes and eats the offerings in the presence of the worshipper; and this is not wonderful, when he finds food in this place every day. Images of the jackal are made in some parts of Bengal, and worshipped, sometimes alone, and at others with the images of Doorga and Shmūshanū-Kalēē. Some Hindoos bow to

the jackal; if it pass by a person on his left, it is a fortunate omen.

The cow is regarded by the Hindoos as a form of Doorga, and called Bhūgūvūtēē.

This goddess has a thousand names, among which are Katyayūnēē, or, the daughter of the sage Katyū.—Gourēē, the yellow coloured.—Kalēē, the black.—Hoimūvūtēē, the daughter of Himalūyū.—Eēshwūrēē, the goddess.—Shiva, the giver of good.—Bhūvanēē, the wife of Shivū.—Sūrvū-mūngūla, she who blesses all.—Ūpūrna, she who amidst religious austerities abstained from eating even leaves.—Parvūtēē, the daughter of the mountain.—Doorga, she who destroyed the giant Doorgū; the inaccessible.—Chūndika, the terrible.—Ūmbika, the mother of the universe.



SECT. II.—*The ten Forms of Doorga.*

THIS goddess is said to have assumed ten different forms in order to destroy two giants, Shoombhū and Nishoombhū.

The following account of these wars is translated from the Markūndēyū pooranū:—At the close of the tréta yoogū, these two giants performed religious austerities for 10,000 years; the merit of which actions brought Shivū from heaven^e, who discovered that by these works of extraordinary devotion they sought to obtain the blessing of immortality. Shivū reasoned long with them, and endeavoured

^e It is a maxim of the Hindoo religion, that by performing religious austerities the gods become subject to the wishes of men.

to persuade them, though in vain, to ask for any other blessing short of immortality. Being denied, they entered upon more severe austerities, which they continued for another thousand years; when Shivũ again appeared, but refused to grant what they asked for. They now suspended themselves with their heads downwards over a slow fire, till the blood streamed from their heads; and continued thus for 800 years, till the gods began to tremble, lest, by performing such rigid acts of holiness, they should be supplanted on their thrones. The king of the gods assembled a council, and imparted to them his fears: the gods admitted that there was great ground for fear, but asked what remedy there was. Agreeably to the advice of Indrũ, Kũndũrpũ (Cupid), with Rũmbha and Tilottũma, the most beautiful of the celestial courtezans, were sent to fill the minds of these giants with sensual desires; and Kũndũrpũ, letting fly his arrow, wounded them both: upon which, awaking from their absorption, and seeing two beautiful women, they were taken in the snare, and abandoned their devotions. With these women they lived 5000 years, after which they began to think of the folly of thus renouncing their hopes of immortality for the sake of sensual gratifications. They suspected that this must have been a contrivance of Indrũ's; and driving the courtezans back to heaven, renewed their devotions, cutting the flesh off their bones, and making burnt-offerings of it to Shivũ; which they continued for another thousand years, till they became entire skeletons, when Shivũ again appeared, and bestowed upon them this blessing—that in riches and strength they should excel the gods.

Being thus exalted above the gods, they soon began to make war with them. After various success on both sides, the giants were every where victorious; till Indrũ

and all the gods, reduced to the most deplorable state of wretchedness, solicited the interference of Brūmha and Vishnoo; but they referred them to Shivū: who also declared that he could do nothing for them. When, however, they reminded him that through his blessing they had been ruined, he advised them to perform religious austerities to Doorga. They did so; and after some time the goddess appeared, gave them her blessing, and immediately, disguised like a common female carrying a pitcher of water, passed the assembled gods. This female asked them whose praise they were chanting? While she uttered these words, she assumed her proper form, and replied, 'They are celebrating my praise.' The new goddess then disappeared, and ascended mount Himalūyū, where Chūndū and Mundū, two of Shoombhū and Nishoombhū's messengers, resided. As these messengers wandered on the mountain, they saw the goddess, and were exceedingly struck with her charms, which they described to their masters; and advised them to engage the affections of this female, even if they gave her all the glorious things which they had obtained in plundering the heavens of the gods. Shoombhū sent Shoogrēvū, a messenger, to the goddess, to inform her that the riches of the three worlds were in his palace; that all the offerings which used to be presented to the gods were now offered to him; and that all these riches, offerings, &c. should be her's, if she would come to him. The goddess replied, that this offer was very liberal; but she had resolved, that the person whom she married must first conquer her in war, and destroy her pride. Shoogrēvū, unwilling to return unsuccessful, still pressed for a favourable answer; promising that he would engage to conquer her in war, and subdue her pride; and asked in an authoritative strain, 'Did she know his master, before whom none of the inhabitants of the three worlds had been

able to stand, whether gods, hydras, or men? How then could she, a female, think of resisting his offers? If his master had ordered him, he would have compelled her to go into his presence immediately.' She said all this was very correct, but that she had taken her resolution, and exhorted him, therefore, to persuade his master to come and try his strength with her. The messenger went to his master, and related what he had heard from this female; on hearing which Shoombhū was filled with rage, and without making any reply, called for Dhōōmlochūnū, his commander in chief, and gave him orders to go to Himalūyū, and seize a certain goddess, (giving him particular directions,) and bring her to him; and if any attempted to rescue her, utterly to destroy them. The commander went to Himalūyū, and acquainting the goddess with his master's orders, she, smiling, invited him to execute them; but, on the approach of this hero, she set up a dreadful roar, (as is usual among the Hindoo warriors when two combatants meet,) by which he was reduced to ashes; after which she destroyed the army of the giant, leaving only a few fugitives to communicate the tidings. Shoombhū and Ni-shoombhū, infuriated, sent Chūndū and Mūndū, who, on ascending the mountain, perceived a female sitting on an ass, laughing; but on seeing them she became full of rage, and drew to her ten, twenty, or thirty of their army at a time, devouring them like fruit. She next seized Mūndū by the hair, cut off his head, and, holding it over her mouth, drank the blood. Chūndū, on seeing the other commander destroyed in this manner, came to close quarters with the goddess; but she, mounted on a lion, sprang on him, and dispatching him as she had done Mūndū, devoured part of his army, and drank the blood of the greater part of the rest. The two giants no sooner heard this alarming news, than they resolved to go themselves, and engage the furious

goddess ; for which purpose they collected all their forces, an infinite number of giants, and marched to Himälŷü. The gods looked down with astonishment on this army of giants, and all the goddesses descended to help Muha-maya (Doorga), who however soon destroyed the giants. Rŷktŷvĕĕjŷ, the principal commander under Shoombhŷ and Ni-shoombhŷ, seeing all his men destroyed, encountered the goddess in person ; but though she filled him with wounds, from every drop of blood which fell to the ground arose a thousand giants equal in strength to Rŷktŷvĕĕjŷ himself^f; hence innumerable enemies surrounded Doorga, and the gods were filled with alarm at this amazing sight. At length Chŷndĕĕ, a goddess who had assisted Kalĕĕ in the engagement, promised that if she would open her mouth, and drink his blood before it fell on the ground, she (Chŷndĕĕ) would engage the giant, and destroy the whole of his strangely-formed offspring. Kalĕĕ consented, and this commander and his army were soon dispatched. Shoombhŷ and Nishoombhŷ, in a state of desperation, next engaged the goddess in single combat, Shoombhŷ making the first onset. The battle was dreadful, inconceivably dreadful, on both sides, till at last both the giants were killed, and Kalĕĕ sat down to feed on the carnage she had made. The gods and goddesses then chanted the praises of the celestial heroine, and she in return bestowed a blessing on each.

After the destruction of these enemies of the gods, the sun (Sŷŷryŷ) shone resplendently forth ; the wind (Vayoo) blew salubriously ; the air became pure ; the gods ascended their thrones ; the hydras attended to the duties of their religion without fear ; the sages performed their devotions

^f This arose from a blessing given by Brŷmha.

without interruption; and the people at large were restored to happiness.

The Chündēē, a part of the Markündéyū pooranū, places these forms of Doorga in the following order: First, as Doorga, she received the messenger of the giants; 2. as Dūshūbhooja^g, she destroyed part of their army; 3. as Singhū-vahinēē^h, she fought with Rūktū-vēējū; 4. as Mūhishū-mūrdinēēⁱ, she slew Shoombhū, in the form of a buffalo; 5. as Jūgūddhatrēē^k, she overcame the army of the giants; 6. as Kalēē^l, she destroyed Rūktū-vēējū; 7. as Mooktū-késhēē^m, she again overcame the army of the giants; 8. as Taraⁿ, she killed Shoombhū; 9. as Chinnū-mūstūka^o, she killed Nishoombhū; 10. as Jūgūdgourēē^p, she was praised by all the gods.

Such of the above forms as are honoured by separate festivals, will be noticed hereafter under their different names.



SECT. III.—*Singhū-vahinēē*^q.

THIS goddess with yellow garments is represented as sitting on a lion. She has four hands; in one a sword; in another a spear; with a third is forbidding fear, and with the fourth bestowing a blessing.

Many people make this image, and worship it in the day

^g Having ten arms. ^h Sitting on a lion. ⁱ Destroyer of the buffalo, [viz. of Shoombhū in this form.] ^k Mother of the world. ^l The black. ^m With flowing hair. ⁿ Saviour. ^o Headless. ^p The yellow. ^q She who sits upon a lion.

time, on the 9th of the increase of the moon, in whatever month they please, but in general in the month Ashwinū or Choitrū, for two or three days. The ceremonies, including bloody sacrifices, are almost entirely the same as those before the image of Doorga. Sometimes a rich man celebrates this worship at his own expense, and at other times several persons, who expect heaven as their reward, unite in it.

Some Hindoos keep in their houses images of all the following forms of Doorga, made of gold, silver, brass, copper, crystal, stone, or mixed metal, and worship them daily.



SECT. IV.—*Mūhishū-mūrdinēē*ᵣ.

THIS is the image of a yellow woman, sitting on a lion; having either six or ten arms. In her hands are seen a conch, a discus, a club, a water-lily, a shield, a large spear, and the tail of a snake.

Some persons make this image, and worship it with the accustomed ceremonies, including bloody sacrifices, on the 9th of the month Choitrū.

The Tūntrū-saru declares, that those who worship this goddess will obtain present riches and future happiness.

Many of the regular Hindoos, as well as the heterodox sects, receive the initiatory rites of this goddess, and adopt her as their guardian deity.

ᵣ She who destroyed Mūhishū, a giant.

SECT. V.—*Jūgūddhatrēē*.*

THIS is the image of a yellow woman, dressed in red, and sitting on a lion. In her four hands she holds a conch[†], a discus, a club, and a water-lily.

A very popular festival in honour of this goddess is held in the month Kartikū, on the 7th, 8th, and 9th of the increase of the moon, when bloody sacrifices are offered as at the Doorga festival: the formulas are necessarily different. Very large sums are frequently expended on these occasions, especially in the illuminations, dances, songs, entertaining of bramhūns, &c. as many as one hundred and fifty persons being employed as singers and dancers, beside others who sing verses from the Chūndēē, the Krishnū-mūngūlū, the Ramayūnū, &c. A number of men like guards are also hired, and placed near the temple for the sake of shew. Much indecent mirth takes place, and numbers of men dance naked before the image, and call *this the way to heaven*; the venerable bramhūns smiling with complacency on these works of *merit*, so acceptable to the gods. The benefits expected from this worship are, the fruit of meritorious actions, riches, the gratification of every desire, and future happiness. These four things are commonly mentioned in the Hindoo shastrūs, as promised by the gods to their worshippers.

* The mother of the world.

† This shell is blown at the times of worship, and at other festivals.

SECT. VI.—*Mooktū-késhēē*^u.

THIS is the image of a naked woman, painted blue, standing on the breast of Shivū, and having four arms: the upper right arm is placed in the posture of bestowing a blessing; with the other she is forbidding fear, and in her left hands she holds a sword and a helmet.

The festival of this goddess is held on the 14th of the decrease of the moon in the month Maghū: the ceremonies are like those before the image of Kalēē, but the bloody sacrifices are very numerous. Spirituous liquors are privately presented to the goddess, at a late hour at night, or rather early in the morning. Some of the Hindoo shastrūs allow of this practice, yet it is far from being honourable. I have been credibly informed, that numbers of bramhūns, in different places, at the annual festival of this goddess, join in drinking the spirits which have been offered to her, and, in a state of intoxication, pass from the temples into the streets, preceded by lighted torches, dancing to the sound of music, and singing indecent songs. Some are hugging one another; others fall down quite intoxicated; others lose their way, and go along lifting up their hands, dancing and singing alone. The purer Hindoos stand gazing at a considerable distance, lest they should be dragged among this crowd of drunken bramhūns.

The benefits promised to the worshippers of this goddess are riches now, and heaven hereafter.

Very many persons are initiated into the rites of this goddess as their guardian deity.

^u Of flowing hair.

SECT. VII.—*Tara*^x.

THIS is the image of a black woman, with four arms, standing on the breast of Shivũ: in one hand she holds a sword; in another a giant's head; with the others she is bestowing a blessing, and forbidding fear.

The worship of Tara is performed in the night, in different months, at the total wane of the moon, before the image of Siddheshwũrēē; when bloody sacrifices are offered, and it is reported, that even human beings were formerly immolated in secret to this ferocious deity; who is considered by the Hindoos as soon incensed, and not unfrequently inflicting on an importunate worshipper the most shocking diseases, as a vomiting of blood, or some other dreadful complaint which soon puts an end to his life.

Almost all the disciples of this goddess are from among the heterodox: many of them, however, are learned men, Tara being considered as the patroness of learning. Some Hindoos are supposed to have made great advances in knowledge through the favour of this goddess; and many a stupid boy, after reading some incantations containing the name of Tara, has become a learned man.

SECT. VIII.—*Chinnũ-mũstũka*^y.

THIS is the image of a naked yellow woman, with her head half severed from her body^z, wearing a necklace of

^x The deliverer.

^y The headless.

^z The Tũntrũs give the following explanation of this monstrous feature

skulls, and standing on the body of Shivū. She is surrounded with dead bodies; has a scymitar in one hand; a giant's skull in another; and with two others is forbidding fear, and bestowing a blessing.

This image is not made at present, but the worship may be celebrated before the images of any other female deities. Those who receive the initiatory rites of this goddess worship her daily before the shalgramū, or water, or flowers, or an incantation written on a metal dish^a. She promises her disciples riches, learning, or absorption^b; but principally riches. Some people are afraid of becoming her disciples, lest, in a fit of anger, she should bring upon them a violent death^c.

in the image of this goddess:—At a certain time, not being able to procure any of the giants for her prey, to satisfy her thirst of blood, Chinnū-mūstūka actually cut her own throat, that the blood issuing thence might spout up into her mouth. I have seen a picture of this image, agreeing with this description; and at Chachra, in Jessore, such an image may be seen at present, the half-severed head resting on the left hand of the goddess, and streams of blood falling into her mouth.

^a Before any one of these things, the worship of any of the gods may be performed; but the shalgramū is mostly preferred.

^b A person can receive only one blessing at a time from his god. The Hindoos, however, relate a story of a blind man, who put a trick on his guardian deity, by obtaining three blessings from him at once: he asked that he might see—his child—eat from off a golden dish every day. He was then childless.

^c The following story, current among the Hindoos, I give as a proof of the dread in which they live of some of their deities:—A bramhūn who had received the initiating incantation of this goddess, to avoid dying an unnatural death, used to confine himself to his house; where, however, a hatchet, hung up for sacrificing animals, fell upon and killed him as he lay asleep.

SECT. IX.—*Jūgñdgourēē*^d.

THIS is the whole length figure of a yellow woman, with four arms ; holding in her hands a conch, a discus, a club, and a water-lily. She is mostly worshipped on the 7th, 8th, and 9th of the increase of the moon in Maghū. Very few persons learn the initiatory rites of this goddess.

SECT. X.—*Vūgñlamookhēē*^e.

THE image of this deity is never made ; though she is sometimes worshipped on the 7th, 8th, and 9th of the moon in Maghū, before a pan of water, or some other proper substitute. The officiating bramhūn, in yellow garments, presents yellow flowers, flesh, fish, and spirituous liquors, to her : the animals sacrificed are not numerous.

This goddess is frequently worshipped in the hope of procuring the removal, the injury, or the destruction, of enemies, or whatever else the worshipper desires—which is sometimes *the wife of another*. He makes no doubt, if he can please the goddess by presents, or flattery, or by inflicting, for her sake, certain cruelties on his body, that she will be disposed to grant him even this last favour. If the ceremonies be not performed in strict conformity to the rules laid down in the shastrū, it is believed that the worshipper will be deprived of reason, or of speech, or that some other dreadful calamity will befall him.

^d The yellow.^e Of fear-exciting countenance.

In the burnt-sacrifice presented to this goddess, turmeric, oil, and salt, form the principal ingredients. The Hindoos believe that after performing the proper ceremonies for the destruction of an enemy, the goddess soon complies with the prayers of the worshipper. Shōōdrūs, of course, employ bramhūns in thus attempting to accomplish their murderous wishes. Particular forms of praise and of petition, referring in many cases to the injury or destruction of enemies, addressed to this goddess, are contained in the Tūntrū-sarū.



SECT. XI.—*Prūtyūngira*†.

THE image of this idol is never made, but is worshipped in the night whenever a person chooses, which is, generally, when he wants to injure or destroy another. The officiating bramhūn dressed in red, and wearing a roodrakshū necklace, offers, among other things, red flowers, spirituous liquors, and bloody sacrifices. The flesh of crows, or cats, or of some other animal, after having been dipped in spirituous liquors, sometimes makes a part of the burnt-offerings; the worshippers believing that the flesh of the enemy, for whose injury these ceremonies are performed, will swell on his body as the sacrificed flesh does on the fire. Particular forms of praise are also repeated before this image to accomplish the destruction of enemies. I here give a specimen: ‘Oh! Prūtyūngira, mother! Destroy, destroy my enemies! Kill! kill! Reduce them to ashes! Drive them away! Devour them! Devour them! Cut them in two! Drink, drink their blood! Destroy them root and branch!

† The well-proportioned.

With thy thunder-bolt, spear, scymitar, discus, or rope, destroy them.'

A story to the following purport is very current among the Hindoos:—Jafūr-alee-kha, the nabob of Moorshūdūbad, was much attached to Ramū-kantū, his Hindoo treasurer; who was at enmity with Kalēē-shūnkūrū, a very learned Hindoo, and a great worshipper of the female deities. The latter, to effect the destruction of Ramū-kantū, began to worship the goddess Prūtyūngira. He had not performed the ceremonies long, before Ramū-kantū became sick, and it was made known to him and the nabob, that Kalēē-shūnkūrū was thus employed. The nabob, full of rage, ordered that Kalēē-shūnkūrū should be brought before him: but he fled before the messengers could seize him, and began to perform these ceremonies for the destruction of the nabob. A servant, mistaken for Kalēē-shūnkūrū, was, however, seized; but he bribed the messengers, that they might protract his journey as much as possible. They did so, and the day before they arrived at Moorshūdūbad the nabob died.—I give this story to shew, what a strong possession the popular superstition has taken of the minds of the people; who, while smoaking together, listen to these stories with the utmost eagerness and surprise, as the villagers in England tell stories current amongst them while sitting round the winter's fire.

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SECT. XII.—*Unnū-pōōrna* †.

THIS image may be made standing, or sitting on the water-lily: in the right hand is a spoon, like that with which the

† She who fills with food; from *unnū*, food, and *pōōrnū*, full.

Hindoos stir their boiling rice, and in the other a rice dish : Shivū, as a naked mendicant, is standing before the image asking relief.

The worship paid to this form of Doorga is performed on the 7th, 8th, and 9th days of the moon's increase in the month Choitrū : bloody sacrifices, fish, and spirituous liquors are among the offerings. Ūnnū-pōorna being the guardian deity of many of the Hindoos, (who have a proverb amongst them, that a sincere disciple of this goddess never wants rice,) very great festivities take place at this festival, accompanied with music, dancing, filthy songs, and every thing else calculated to deprave the heart.

A Hindoo rising in a morning, before his eyes are well open, repeats the name of this goddess—' Ūnnū-pōorna ! Ūnnū-pōorna ! ' and hopes, that through her favour he shall be well fed that day. When one Hindoo wishes to compliment another on his riches or liberality, he says, ' Oh ! Sir, your house is as full of riches as that of Ūnnū-pōorna : ' or, if he speak of another when absent, he says, ' Such a one, in liberality, is like Ūnnū-pōorna.'



SECT. XIII.—*Gūnēshū-jūnūnēē*^h.

THIS name Doorga assumed after the birth of Gūnēshū : she is here represented as sitting on the water-lily, dressed in red, and supporting with one arm the infant Gūnēshū at the breast, while the other hand rests on the knee of the infant.

^h The mother of Gūnēshū.

A small festival in honour of this goddess is celebrated in the month Ūgrūhayūnū or Phalagoonū, on the 7th, 8th, and 9th of the increase of the moon. Some years ago, at Gooptee-para, a village about forty miles north of Calcutta, a great festival was held in honour of Gūnēshū-jūnūnēē, when fifty thousand roopees or more were expended. The bramhūns of the village collected money to defray the expenses; some gave one thousand, others two, and others five thousand roopees: and crowds came two or three days journey to be present. The dancing, singing, music, &c. began a month before the principal day of worship: all the visitors were entertained, and more than two thousand animals were slain.



SECT. XIV.—*Krishnū-kroṛa*ⁱ.

THIS is an image of Doorga giving suck to Krishnū, to destroy the poison which he had received in a quarrel with Kalēēyū, a hydra.

A festival in honour of this goddess is held on the 7th, 8th, and 9th of the increase of the moon, in the day, in the month Maghū.

The history of this idol is thus related:—In the west of Hindoost'han a stone image was once found in a pool; and no information could be obtained to what it related, until a Brūmhūcharēē referred them to the following story in one of the Tāntrūs.—In the neighbourhood of Vrinda-vūnū, by the river Yūmoona, Soubhūree, a sage, for a long time performed religious austerities. One day, while in the

ⁱ She who holds Krishnū in her arms.

midst of his devotions, he saw a shūkoolū and some other fish playing together; with which sight he was much pleased, till Gūroorū, the king of the birds, descended into the water, and snatched up the shūkoolū fish. The sage, unable to punish Gūroorū, pronounced a curse upon this bird-god, or any other bird, who should hereafter come to destroy the fish in this spot; and this curse was afterwards the means of preserving the king of the hydras from the wrath of Gūroorū in the following manner.—The mountain Mūlyū was the resort of many serpents, who daily collected a number of frogs, &c. and presented them to Gūroorū, to conciliate him, and to prevent his devouring them. At last Kalēyū, the king of the hydras, commanded his subjects to give the frogs to him, promising to protect them from Gūroorū: but the latter on his arrival, finding no food, attacked and overcame Kalēyū; who, though defeated, amused Gūroorū by rehearsing some verses which no one understood but himself^k, till he had made good his retreat into a deep place of the river, where Gūroorū durst not follow him for fear of the curse of the sage. In consequence of the serpent's remaining in this spot, the poison proceeding from his body had destroyed all the trees, water &c. for two miles round, and whoever drank of the water died. About this time Krishnū was born; who in his childhood, on a certain day, discovering that a dreadful mortality existed among the cows and the boys who kept them, asked the reason, and was informed that they had been poisoned by the waters of the Yūmoona. Krishnū then jumped from a tree into the river; overcame the serpent, and drave him out of the place. Kalēyū, full of fear, asked where he was to go, for that Gūroorū would certainly kill him. Krishnū, putting his foot on his head, assured

^k These verses, it is said, now compose one of the kavyūs called Pingūlū.

him that when Gūroorū discovered the mark of his foot, he would not destroy him. The waters now became wholesome; the trees gained their verdure; and the boys and cows were restored to life: but the pain arising from the poison in the wounds which Kalēēyū had given to Krishnū was intolerable. He therefore prayed to Doorga, who made him suck the milk from her own breast, by which he was immediately restored to health.

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SECT. XV.—*Vishalakshē*¹.

A CLAY image of this goddess is set up at Shyénūhatēē, a village in Burdwan, which is become a place of great resort for pilgrims. Vast multitudes of buffaloes, sheep, goats, &c. are offered at different times to this goddess, not unfrequently for the destruction of enemies: sheep and goats are offered every day, and it is said that formerly human sacrifices were offered to this goddess. Many persons, it is affirmed, have obtained the privilege of conversing with their guardian deities in consequence of worshipping this image with very shocking ceremonies, while others thus employed are said to have been driven mad; yet some persons receive the name of Vishalakshēē as their guardian deity.

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SECT. XVI.—*Chūndēē*^m.

IMAGES of this form of Doorga are not made at present in Bengal; but this goddess is worshipped by many of the bramhūns, &c. before a metal cup containing the water of

¹ Of large or beautiful eyes.

^m The wrathful.

the Ganges. This worship is celebrated daily, or at the time of the full or change of the moon, or when the sun enters a new sign, or on the 9th of the moon.

The Kalikū-pooranū directs that birds, tortoises, alligators, fish, buffaloes, bulls, he-goats, ichneumons, wild boars, rhinoceroses, antelopes, guanias, rein-deer, lions, tygers, men, and blood drawn from the offerer's own body, be offered to this goddess. The following horrid incantation is addressed to the goddess Chūndēē, when offering an animal in order to effect the destruction of an enemy: 'O goddess, of horrid form, O Chūndika! eat, devour such a one, my enemy, O consort of fire! Salutation to fire! This is the enemy who has done me mischief, now personated by an animal: destroy him, O Mūhamarēē! Sphéng! sphéng! eat, devour.'

Women sometimes make a vow to Chūndēē to engage her to restore their children to health, or to obtain some other favour. If a person recover in whose name such a vow has been made, his neighbours ascribe it to Chūndēē.

The exploits of this goddess are celebrated in a poem written by the poet Kūnkūnū, and recited on various occasions, under the name of Chūndēē-ganū, or Chūndēē-yatra.

SECT. XVII.—*Other Forms of Doorga.*

*Kamakhya*ⁿ.—This goddess is worshipped daily by persons of property before a pan of water, or some other substitute; and also by many shaktūs on the 8th of the moon in both quarters. Those who worship her monthly,

ⁿ She who is called desire.

generally present some particular request in favour of themselves or families. At the Doorga festival this goddess is also worshipped with many ceremonies and at a great expense. A few persons receive the initiatory rites of this goddess, and worship her as their guardian deity.

Vindhyū-vasinēē °.—This is the image of a yellow female, sitting on a lion, with either four or eight arms: she is worshipped in the month Voishakhū, on the 9th, or on the 7th, 8th, or 9th of the increase of the moon: at Benares she is worshipped daily. The destruction of several giants is ascribed to this goddess.

Mūngūlū-Chūndika ♀.—This is the image of a yellow female, sitting on three skulls, clothed in red; having in her right hand a book, and in her left a roodrakshū bead-roll. She is mostly worshipped by females, or rather by bramhūns employed by them, in consequence of some particular distress in their families; when they make a vow to the goddess to worship her a certain number of times if she will deliver them. Even the wives of Mūsūlmans sometimes send offerings to the house of a bramhūn, to be presented to her with prayers. In the month Poushū a small festival is held in honour of this goddess.

Kūmūlē-kaminēē ♀.—This is the image of a female sitting on the water-lily, swallowing an elephant, while with the left hand she is pulling it out of her throat †.—She is wor-

° She who dwelt on mount Vindhyū.

♀ The fervent benefactress.

♀ She who sits on the water-lily.

† This image is said to owe its rise to a vision at sea ascribed to Shrēmūntū, a merchant, the particulars of which are related in the Kūvee-kūnkūnū.

shipped on the 8th of Voishakhū, with the usual ceremonies and festivities.

Rajū-rajéshwūrē^s.—This goddess is represented as sitting on a throne, the three feet of which rest on the heads of Brūmha, Vishnoo, and Shivū. She is worshipped on the 7th, 8th, and 9th of Voishakhū, with the ceremonies common to all the female deities to whom bloody sacrifices are offered.

Yoogadya^t is represented as sitting on a lion, having ten arms.—A festival in honour of this goddess is held on the last day of Voishakhū, at Kshēērū, a village in Burdwan, where many animals are slain, and large quantities of spirituous liquors offered: the goddess at the time of worship is taken out of a tank near the temple. It is supposed that not less than 100,000 people assemble at this place on this occasion. Human sacrifices, I am informed, were formerly offered to this goddess.—So numerous are the sacrifices, that the water of the pool, in which the dead bodies are thrown immediately after decapitation, becomes the colour of blood. These bodies are taken out of the pool again in a little time after the sacrifice. The disciples of this goddess are very numerous.

Kūroonamūyē^u.—In some places the image of this goddess is set up and worshipped daily. At the festivals of Doorga, Kalēē, &c. she is worshipped in a more splendid manner. Some persons make vows to this goddess in times of distress, and many receive the initiatory rites by which she becomes their guardian deity.

^s The goddess who governs Brūmha, Vishnoo, and Shivū.

^t She who existed before the yoogūs.

^u The compassionate.

SECT. XVIII.—*Other Forms of Doorga.*

Tripooora ^x ,	Prüchünda ⁱ ,	Jüya ^u ,
Twürita ^y ,	Chündagra ^k ,	Dévü-séna ^x ,
Nitya ^z ,	Dhōōma-vütēē ^l ,	Swüdha ^y ,
Prüstabinēē ^a ,	Übhüya ^m ,	Swaha ^z ,
Jüyü-doorga ^b ,	Sütēē ⁿ ,	Shantēē ^a ,
Shōōlinēē ^c ,	Gourēē ^o ,	Toostee ^b ,
Müha-lükshmēē ^d ,	Püdma ^p ,	Poostee ^c ,
Shrēē-vidya ^e ,	Shüchēē ^q ,	Dhritee ^d ,
Tripooora-soondürēē ^f ,	Médha ^r ,	Atmü-dévta ^e ,
Vünü-dévēē ^g ,	Savitrēē ^s ,	Koolü-dévta ^f ,
Chündü-nayika ^h ,	Vijüya ^t ,	&c. &c.

All these goddesses are worshipped at the festivals of Doorga, as well as at other times, before the proper representative of a god, as water, the shalgramü, &c. but their images are not now made in Bengal. Many persons receive the initiatory rites of these deities, and pay their devotions daily to the particular goddess whom they have chosen as their guardian deity. Bloody sacrifices, fish, and spirituous

^x She who governs the three worlds, heaven, earth, and the world of the hydras. ^y She who speedily executes her will. ^z The everlasting. ^a The praise-worthy. ^b The destroyer of the giant Doorgü. ^c She who wields the weapon of this name. ^d The great goddess of fortune. ^e The learned. ^f The beauty of the three worlds. ^g The goddess of forests. ^h The destroyer of the giant Chündü. ⁱ The wrathful. ^k The furious. ^l She who is the colour of smoke. ^m She who removes fear. ⁿ The wife of Shivü. ^o The yellow. ^p She who sits on the water-lily. ^q She who tells the truth of all. ^r The wise. ^s The cause of all. ^t The victorious. ^u Ditto. ^x The celestial heroine. ^y She who presides over the manes. ^z Ditto. ^a The comforter. ^b Ditto. ^c The nourisher. ^d The patient. ^e The goddess of souls. ^f She who presides over the generations of men.

liquors, are presented to these goddesses. The last sixteen are worshipped when rice is first given to a child, at the investiture with the poita, at the time of marriage, and in general at all the ceremonies performed for a son before marriage. Jūyū-doorga is worshipped to obtain deliverance from danger.

Beside the above forms of Doorga, there are many others, whose names end with the word Bhoirūvēē, viz. the terrific; and temples consecrated to Bhoirūvū and Bhoirūvēē are erected at many of the holy places visited by the Hindoo pilgrims. When a person performs any of the ceremonies of Hindoo worship at these places, he must first, on pain of meeting with some misfortune, worship these two deities.



SECT. XIX.—*Kalēē.*

THIS goddess may also be considered as a form of Bhūgūvūtēē, or Doorga. According to the Chūndēē, the image of Kalēē, at present worshipped in Bengal, had its origin in the story of Rūktū-vēējū, already inserted in page 127. Kalēē was so overjoyed at the victory she had obtained over this giant, that she danced till the earth shook to its foundation; and Shivū, at the intercession of the gods, was compelled to go to the spot to persuade her to desist. He saw no other way, however, of prevailing, than by throwing himself among the dead bodies of the slain. When the goddess saw that she was dancing on her husband, she was so shocked, that to express her surprise she put out her tongue to a great length, and remained motionless; and she is represented in this posture in almost all the images now made in Bengal.

The Ūdhyatmū Ramayūnū^s gives another story from which the image of Kalēē may have originated:—Ramū, when he returned home with Sēēta from the destruction of Ravūnū, began to boast of his achievements before his wife; who smiled, and said, ‘You rejoice because you have killed a Ravūnū with ten heads; but what would you say to a Ravūnū with 1000 heads?’ ‘Destroy him,’ said Rūmū. Sēēta, again smiling, advised him to stay at home; but he, collecting all the monkies, the giants, and his own soldiers together, with Sēēta, Lūkshmūnū, Shūtrūghnū, and Bhūrūtū, immediately departed for Shūtū-dwēēpū to meet this new Ravūnū; sending Hūnoomanū before to discover the residence of this thousand-headed monster, and bring a description of his person. Hūnoomanū, after a little play with him, returned to Ramū, who soon after attacked the giant: but he, looking forward, beheld Ramū’s army as so many children; and discharged three arrows, one of which sent all the monkies to Kishkindha, their place of residence; another sent all the giants to Lūnka, (Ceylon;) and the third sent all the soldiers to Ūyodhya, Ramū’s capital. Ramū, thunderstruck at being thus left alone in a moment, and thinking that all his adherents had been at once annihilated, began to weep: when Sēēta, laughing at her husband, immediately assumed the terrific form of Kalēē, and furiously attacked this thousand-headed Ravūnū. The conflict lasted ten years, but she at length killed the giant, drank his blood, and began to dance and toss about the limbs of his body. Her dancing shook the earth to its centre, so that all the gods, filled with alarm, applied to Shivū: but he declared that he almost despaired

^s There are four Ramayūnūs, one written by Valmēēkee, another by Vyasū-dēvū, and two others, called the Udbootū and the Udhyatmū Ramayūnūs; but the others are in little estimation compared with the work of Valmēēkee.

of calming her passions, for she was mad with joy; he promised, however, to do all that could be expected from a god in so desperate a case; but, pausing for some time, and seeing no other alternative, he, in the presence of the assembled gods, threw himself among the dead bodies under her feet. Brūmha called to the goddess, and said, 'O goddess! what art thou doing? Dost thou not see that thou art trampling on thy husband?' She stooped, and saw Shivū under her feet; and was so ashamed, that she stood still, and threw out her tongue to an uncommon length^h. By this means Shivū saved the universe; and Sēēta, again assuming her proper form, went home with Ramū and his brothers.

In the images commonly worshipped, Kalēē is represented as a very black female, with four arms; having in one hand a scymitar, and in another the head of a giant, which she holds by the hair; another hand is spread open bestowing a blessing; and with the other she is forbidding fear. She wears two dead bodies for ear-rings, and a necklace of skulls; and her tongue hangs down to her chin. The hands of several giants are hung as a girdle round her loins, and her tresses fall down to her heels. Having drank the blood of the giants she has slain in combat, her eye-brows are bloody, and the blood is falling in a stream down her breast; her eyes are red like those of a drunkard. She stands with one leg on the breast of her husband Shivū, and rests the other on his thighⁱ.

^h When the Hindoo women are shocked or ashamed at any thing, they put out their tongues, as a mode of expressing their feelings.

ⁱ The image of Minerva, it will be recollected, was that of a threatening goddess, exciting terror: on her shield she bore the head of a gorgon. Sir W. Jones considers Kalēē as the Proserpine of the Greeks.

This deity is equal in ferocity to any of the preceding forms of Doorga. In the Kalika pooranũ MEN are pointed out, amongst other animals, as proper for sacrifice. It is here said that the blood of a tyger pleases the goddess for one hundred years, and the blood of a lion, a rein-deer, or a MAN, a thousand. But by the sacrifice of THREE MEN, she is pleased 100,000 years! I insert two or three extracts from the Sanguinary Chapter of the Kalika pooranũ :—‘Let a human victim be sacrificed at a place of holy worship, or at a cemetery where dead bodies are buried. Let the oblation be performed in the part of the cemetery called hérũkũ, or at a temple of Kamakshya, or on a mountain. Now attend to the mode : The human victim is to be immolated in the east division, which is sacred to Bhoirũvũ ; the head is to be presented in the south division, which is looked upon as the place of skulls sacred to Bhoirũvũ ; and the blood is to be presented in the west division, which is denominated hérũkũ. Having immolated a human victim, with all the requisite ceremonies at a cemetery, or holy place, let the sacrificer be cautious not to cast his eyes upon it. The victim must be a person of good appearance, and be prepared by ablutions, and requisite ceremonies, (such as eating consecrated food the day before, and by abstinence from flesh and venery,) and must be adorned with chaplets of flowers, and besmeared with sandal wood. Then causing the victim to face the north, let the sacrificer worship the several deities presiding over the different parts of the victim’s body : let the worship be then paid to the victim himself by his name. Let him worship Brũmha in the victim’s rhũndrũ, i. e. cave of Brũmha, cavity in the skull, under the spot where the *sutura coronalis* and *sagittalis* meet. Let him worship the earth in his nose, &c.—Worshipping the king of serpents, let him pronounce the following incantation : ‘O best of men ! O most auspi-

cious! O thou who art an assemblage of all the deities, and most exquisite! bestow thy protection on me; save me, thy devoted; save my sons, my cattle, and kindred; preserve the state, the ministers belonging to it, and all friends; and as death is unavoidable, part with (thy organs of) life, doing an act of benevolence. Bestow upon me, O most auspicious! the bliss which is obtained by the most austere devotion, by acts of charity, and performance of religious ceremonies; and at the same time, O most excellent! attain supreme bliss thyself. May thy auspices, O most auspicious! keep me secure from rakshūsūs, pishachūs, terrors, serpents, bad princes, enemies, and other evils; and, death being inevitable, charm Bhūgūvūtē in thy last moments by copious streams of blood spouting from the arteries of thy fleshly neck.'—When this has been done, O my children! the victim is even as myself, and the guardian deities of the ten quarters take place in him; then Brūmha and all the other deities assemble in the victim; and be he ever so great a sinner, he becomes pure from sin; and when pure, his blood changes to ambrosia, and he gains the love of Mūhadévē, the goddess of the yogū nidrū, (i. e. the tranquil repose of the mind from an abstraction of ideas,) who is the goddess of the whole universe, the very universe itself. He does not return for a considerable length of time in the human form, but becomes a ruler of the gūnū dévtas, and is much respected by me myself. The victim who is impure from sin, or ordure and urine, Kamakshya will not even hear named. The blind, the crippled, the aged, the sick, the afflicted with ulcers, the hermaphrodite, the imperfectly formed, the scarred, the timid, the leprous, the dwarfish, and the perpetrator of mūha patūkū, (heinous offences, such as slaying a bramhūn, drinking spirits, stealing gold, or defiling a spiritual teacher's bed,) one under twelve years of age, one who is

impure from the death of a kinsman, &c. one who is impure from the death of mūha gooroo, (father and mother,) which impurity lasts for one whole year—these severally are unfit subjects for immolation, even though rendered pure by sacred texts. Let not a bramhūn or a chūndalū be sacrificed; nor a prince, nor that which has been already presented to a bramhūn, or a deity; nor the offspring of a prince; nor one who has conquered in battle; nor the offspring of a bramhūn, or of a kshūtriyū; nor a childless brother; nor a father; nor a learned person; nor one who is unwilling; nor the maternal uncle of the sacrificer. The day previous to a human sacrifice, let the victim be prepared by the text manūshtūkū and three dévēcē gūndhū shūktūs, and the texts wadrūngū, and by touching his head with the axe, and besmearing the axe with sandal, &c. perfumes, and then taking some of the sandal, &c. from off the axe, and besmearing the victim's neck therewith. If the severed head of a human victim smile, it indicates increase of prosperity and long life to the sacrificer, without doubt; and if it speak, whatever it says will come to pass.'

This work further lays down directions for a person's drawing blood from himself, and offering it to the goddess, repeating the following incantation: 'Hail! sūpreme delusion! Hail! goddess of the universe! Hail! thou who fulfillest the desires of all. May I presume to offer thee the blood of my body; and wilt thou deign to accept it, and be propitious towards me.'

A person's cutting off his own flesh, and presenting it to the goddess as a burnt-sacrifice, is another method of pleasing this infernal deity: 'Grant me, O goddess! bliss, in proportion to the fervency with which I present thee with my own flesh, invoking thee to be propitious to me.'

Salutation to thee again and again, under the mysterious syllables *ũng*, *ũng*.’

A person’s burning his body, by applying the burning wick of a lamp to it, is also very acceptable to Kalēē, &c. On this occasion this incantation is used : ‘ Hail! goddess! Salutation to thee, under the syllables *ũng*, *ũng*. To thee I present this auspicious luminary, fed with the flesh of my body, enlightening all around, and exposing to light also the inward recesses of my soul^k.’

It is observed in this work, that the head or the blood of an animal, in its simple state, forms a proper offering to a goddess, but that flesh must be presented as a burnt-offering. Other Tūntrūs observe, that the eating of the flesh of men, cows, and swine, and drinking spirits, after these things have been offered to an idol, must be done in secret; or the person will commit a great crime, and sink into poverty. I am credibly informed, that very many bramhūns in Bengal eat cow’s flesh, and, after they have been offered to an idol, drink spirits, though none of them will publicly acknowledge it.

Thieves frequently pay their devotions to Kalēē, and to all the goddesses to whom bloody sacrifices are offered, under the hope of carrying on their villainous designs with security and success^l. A gang of ten persons, perhaps, agree to plunder a house; who meet together in a dark

^k See Mr. Blaquiere’s translation of the Sanguinary Chapter, Asiatic Researches, vol. v.—The author hopes Mr. Blaquiere will excuse the liberty he has taken of altering his spelling of Sāngskritū words, as he has done it merely to preserve uniformity throughout the work.

^l One of Jupiter’s names, it is well known, was Prædator, because plunder was offered to him.

night, under a tree where an image of Siddéshwūrēē is placed; and bring to the spot spirituous liquors, fish, and other offerings. One of the company, a bramhūn, goes through the ceremonies of worship: at the close of which a bloody sacrifice is offered, and the instrument worshipped which is to cut through the wall of the house; at which time the following incantation from the Chorū-pūnchashika is read: ‘O! Sindhūkatee! (the name of the instrument) formed by the goddess Vishaēē! Kalēē commanded thee to cut a passage into the house, to cut through stones, bones, bricks, wood, the earth, and mountains, and, through the blessing of Ūnadya^m, to make a way by cutting the earth from the house of the Malinēē to that of Vidyaⁿ, and that the soil brought out should be carried away by the wind. Haree-jhee^o and Chamūnda have given

^m A name of Kalēē, which means, without beginning.

ⁿ Soondūrū, the son of Goonū-sindhoo, raja of Kanchee-poorū, was overcome by the charms of Vidya, the daughter of Vēērū-singhū, the raja of Burdwan. For the purposes of courtship he concealed himself at the house of a flower-seller (Malinēē) near the palace of Vēērū-singhū, and began to pay his devotions to the goddess Kalēē; who gave him this incantation, and the instrument Sindhūkatee, that he might cut his way to his fair one. One night, however, Soondūrū was caught in the palace, and seized as a thief. As he was led from prison to the place of execution, he composed fifty verses in praise of the raja's daughter, which verses have since received the name of Chorū-pūnchashika. The Hindoos add, that when they were about to execute Soondūrū, the cords by which he was bound miraculously burst asunder, and the executioners fell senseless to the ground; in consequence, the execution was postponed, and the next night Kalēē appeared to Vēērū-singhū in a dream, and directed him to marry his daughter to Soondūrū; who was not a thief, but the son of the raja of Kanchee-poorū, a very proper person to become his son-in-law. The marriage was soon after celebrated in the most splendid manner.

^o The Hindoos say, that a female of the Haree cast was once honoured with an interview by the goddess Kamakshya, who delivered to her a variety of incantations, now used by the lowest casts for the most ridiculous, as well as brutal and wicked purposes.

this blessing, and Kamakshya (Kālēē) has given the command.' After the reading of this incantation, the thieves sit down to eat and drink the things that have been offered; and when nearly intoxicated, they gird their garments firmly round their loins, rub their bodies well with oil, daub their eyes with lamp-black, and repeat an incantation to enable them to see in the dark; and thus proceed to the spot: when they cut a hole through the wall, plunder the house, and sometimes murder the inhabitants.

Some time ago, two Hindoos were executed at Calcutta for robbery. Before they entered upon their work of plunder, they worshipped Kālēē, and offered prayers before her image, that they might be protected by the goddess in the act of thieving. It so happened, that the goddess left these disciples in the lurch; they were detected, tried, and sentenced to be hanged. While under sentence of death, a native Catholic, in the same place and circumstances, was visited by a Roman Catholic priest to prepare him for death. These Hindoos now reflected, that as Kālēē had not protected them, notwithstanding they had paid their devotions to her, there could be no hope that she would save them after death; they might as well, therefore, renounce their cast: which resolution they communicated to their fellow-prisoner, who procured for them a prayer from the Catholic priest, translated into the Bengalee language. I saw a copy of this prayer in the hands of the native Catholic who gave me this account. These men at last, out of pure revenge upon Kālēē, died in the faith of the Virgin Mary: and the Catholics, after the execution, made a grand funeral for them; as these persons, they said, embraced the Catholic faith, and renounced their cast, *from conviction*.

Agūm-vagēēshū, a learned Hindoo, about five hundred

years ago, formed the image of Kalēē according to the preceding description, and worshipped it monthly, choosing for this purpose the darkest nights in the month; he made and set up the image, worshipped it, and destroyed it, on the same night. At present the greater number of the worshippers of Kalēē hold a festival to her honour on the last night of the decrease of the moon in the month Kārtikū, and call it the Shyama^p festival.

A few persons celebrate the worship of Kalēē at the full moon in Kārtikū; the ceremonies of which are performed before a picture of this goddess, drawn on a stiff mat of reeds seven or eight feet long. This festival lasts three days, and on the fourth the picture is thrown into the river.

Some also worship Kalēē for one night on the 14th of the decrease of the moon, in the month Maghū; and a few rich men do so monthly, on the last night of the moon: while others worship this goddess in the month Jyoisht'hū, when it is called the Phūlū-hūrēē festival, on account of the many mangoes, jak fruits, &c. offered to her.

A few years ago, I went to the house of Kalēē-shūnkūrū-ghoshū, at Calcutta, at the time of the Shyama festival, to see the animals sacrificed to Kalēē. The buildings where the worship was performed were raised on four sides, with an area in the middle. The image was placed at the north end, with the face to the south; and the two side rooms, and one of the end rooms opposite the image, were filled with spectators: in the area were the animals devoted to sacrifice, and also the executioner, with Kalēē-shūnkūrū,

^p A name of Kalēē, meaning black.

a few attendants, and about twenty persons to throw the animal down, and hold it in the post, while the head was cut off. The goats were sacrificed first, then the buffaloes, and last of all two or three rams. In order to secure the animals, ropes were fastened round their legs; they were then thrown down, and the neck placed in a piece of wood fastened into the ground, and made open at the top like the space betwixt the prongs of a fork. After the animal's neck was fastened in the wood by a peg which passed over it, the men who held it pulled forcibly at the heels; while the executioner, with a broad heavy axe, cut off the head at one blow: the heads were carried in an elevated posture by an attendant, (dancing as he went,) the blood running down him on all sides, into the presence of the goddess. Kalēē-shŭnkŭrŭ, at the close, went up to the executioner, took him in his arms, and gave him several presents of cloth, &c. The heads and blood of the animals, as well as different meat-offerings, are presented with incantations as a feast to the goddess; after which clarified butter is burnt on a prepared altar of sand. Never did I see men so eagerly enter into the shedding of blood, nor do I think any butchers could slaughter animals more expertly. The place literally swam with blood. The bleating of the animals, the numbers slain, and the ferocity of the people employed, actually made me unwell; and I returned about midnight, filled with horror and indignation.

The gifts to bramhŭns and guests at this festival are numerous, and in some instances very expensive. The bramhŭns, and then the family and other guests, are entertained, when the spirituous liquors which have been presented to the goddess are drank privately by those who are in the secret. The festival closes with the dances and songs before the goddess.

The reader may form an idea how much idolatry prevailed at the time when the Hindoo monarchy flourished, from the following circumstance, which belongs to a modern period, when the Hindoo authority in Hindoost'hanū was almost extinct.—Raja Krishnū-chūndrū-rayū, and his two immediate successors, in the month Kartikū, annually gave orders to all the people over whom they had a nominal authority to keep the Shyama festival, and threatened every offender with the severest penalties on non-compliance. In consequence of these orders, in more than ten thousand houses, in one night, in the zillah of Krishnū-nūgūrū, the worship of this goddess was celebrated. The number of animals destroyed could not be less than ten thousand. The officiating bramhūns, especially those who perform religious ceremonies for shōōdrūs, were greatly perplexed, as a single bramhūn had to perform the ceremonies of worship at two hundred houses, situated in different villages, in one night. All the joiners, barbers, or blacksmiths, in fifteen or twenty villages, in many instances have but one officiating priest, the bramhūns in general being unwilling to incur the disgrace which arises from performing religious services for shōōdrūs.

Eeshanū-chūndrū-rayū, the grandson of Krishnū-chūndrū-rayū, in certain years, presented to Kalēē eighty thousand pounds weight of sweetmeats, the same quantity of sugar, a thousand women's cloth garments, the same number of women's China silk garments, a thousand offerings, including rice, plantains, peas, &c. and immolated a thousand buffaloes, a thousand goats, and the same number of sheep; which altogether could not cost less than ten thousand roopees, while the other expenses amounted to scarcely less than twenty thousand. To defray these expenses, this raja sold the greater part of his patrimony; and in this and

other idolatrous customs he and other Hindoo rajas have expended almost the whole of their estates.

Raja Ram-Krishnū also expended very large sums of money upon the worship of Kalēē. He set up a stone image of this goddess a Vūrahū-nūgūrū; on which occasion he is said to have spent a lack of roopees. He also endowed this image with such a large revenue, that at present five hundred persons are maintained there daily. In the service of this goddess he has nearly reduced himself to poverty, though formerly from the rents of the lands, &c. he used to pay fifty-two lacks of roopees annually into the Company's treasury.

Kalēē is the guardian deity of very many of the Bengalees, especially of the bramhūns.

At Kalēē-ghatū, near Calcutta, is a celebrated image of this goddess, 'whom (in the opinion of the Hindoos) all 'Asia, and the whole world worshippeth.' Having obtained an account of this temple from a bramhūn whom I sent to Kalēē-ghatū for the purpose, I here lay it before my readers:—

The temple consists of one room, with a large pavement around it. The image is a large black stone, to which a horrid face, partly cut and partly painted, has been given; there are neither arms nor legs, a cloth covering all the lower part which should be the body. In front of the temple is a very large building capable of seating two hundred people; in which, and on the pavement around the temple, many bramhūns daily sit reading the Chūndēē, a work on the wars of Kalēē: on some days as many as a thousand bramhūns may be seen thus employed. Beyond

this building, in front of the image, the animals for sacrifice are slain. Not fewer than four thousand persons assemble on particular occasions at this temple, especially at the Shyama and Doorga festivals; and, twice a week, on the Chétúla¹ market days, two thousand people or more visit this place, multitudes of whom (my informer says, not less than a thousand) present offerings. At these times it is common for a Hindoo to go up to the temple, and, presenting himself at the door with joined hands, to address himself thus to the idol: ‘Oh! mother! I am going to the market for such and such a purpose. If thou grant me success, I will on the next market day present offerings to thee to the amount of ——.’ Or he says to another person standing near, ‘See, brother, I have promised to mother so and so, if she will accomplish my wishes in the market.’

About nine o’clock each day, the bramhūn who in turn performs the duties at the temple, and who receives the offerings of the day, after cleaning and bathing the image, puts on it the garlands of flowers and other ornaments, sweeps the temple, and then throws open the doors, calling out, ‘Victory to the great Kalēē! Victory to the great Kalēē!’ These compliments on different mornings he changes at pleasure. After this, persons going to bathe, or coming from bathing, approach the door of the temple, and bow to the goddess: and now the daily worship is performed, which occupies about an hour; after which men and women are seen bringing their offerings to the idol, which continue to be presented during the greater part of the day. Some merely present them, without asking for

¹ An adjoining village.

² It is said that formerly, especially in times of scarcity, numbers of men were sold at this market.

any blessing: these persons take away a few flowers, or any other trifle of what they have offered, as something that will secure the good of the family; and friends on a visit at the house of such a person beg any thing of this kind, and eat it, or wear it in their hair. Other visitors to the temple leave part of the offerings there, and take away the other part to present to their friends. Others make a vow, while the offering is presented to the image, in some such words as these: 'Oh! goddess! mother Kalēē! If thou wilt deliver me out of such or such a trouble, or wilt bestow such or such a blessing, I will present to thee [here the petitioner repeats the names of all the offerings or bloody sacrifices].' Disputes arise almost daily in the temple betwixt the worshippers and the priests respecting the offerings, and not unfrequently a violent scramble takes place for the meat-offerings in the presence of the goddess herself: the officiating bramhūn says, 'Who is to have these offerings?' to which the worshipper replies, 'Oh! sir! our family priest always receives these things. I must carry them home for him.' Or a man bringing offerings procures a bramhūn to go and tell a lie in the presence of the goddess, saying to him, 'Sir, the bramhūns at the temple of Kalēē are such notorious cheats, that of all I give to the goddess, she will probably get nothing but a few flowers; and they are so rapacious that I shall never get these offerings out of their hands:' on which this bramhūn carries the offerings to the temple, and declares, that they belong to the bramhūns of such a temple, and must be returned to them. By these contrivances the offerer obtains what he has given to the goddess; and, giving part to the bramhūn who has extricated him from the rapacious hands of the proprietors of the temple, he takes the remainder home. About three o'clock in the afternoon, food is placed before the goddess, consisting of rice, greens,

roots, fruits, milk, curds, clarified butter, flesh, spirituous liquors^s (in a concealed form), sweetmeats, &c. &c. Generally about 250 pounds of rice are cooked daily, but at particular times twice or thrice as much. After reserving as much as is necessary for his own family, the officiating bramhūn sells the rest of the offerings to devout visitors or neighbours, and gives away what he cannot sell. When a bloody sacrifice is offered, the offerer either pays the priest for his trouble, or gives up the slaughtered animal. The slayer also receives a fee. Of this flesh the officiating bramhūn keeps what he pleases, and sells the rest to bramhūns, shōōdrūs, Portuguese, and persons from all parts of the neighbourhood^t.

The daily offerings to this goddess are astonishingly numerous. On days when the weather is very unfavourable, not less than three hundred and twenty pounds of rice, twenty-four of sugar, forty of sweetmeats, twelve of clarified butter, ten of flour, ten quarts of milk, a peck of pease, eight hundred plantains, and other things, (the price of which may amount to about five shillings,) are offered, and eight or ten goats sacrificed. On common days, of all these things three times the quantity; and at great festivals, or when a rich man comes to worship, ten, twenty, or forty times this quantity; and as many as forty or fifty buffaloes, and a thousand goats are slain.

Raja Nūvū-Krishnū, of Calcutta, about fifty years ago,

^s It is affirmed that the greater number of grown up persons in this village drink spirits. Bramhūns may be seen in front of the temple, drinking spirits at noon day; and religious mendicants walking about, naked, without the least sense of shame.

^t The women belonging to the temple have become such good cooks, that it is not uncommon for persons to pay for a dinner from their hands, preferring it to any thing they could get elsewhere.

when on a visit to Kalēē-ghatū, expended, it is said, not less than 100,000 roopees on the worship of this goddess. Amongst the offerings was a gold necklace valued at 10,000 roopees, and, beside other ornaments, a rich bed, silver plates, dishes, and basons; sweetmeats, and other food sufficient for the entertainment of a thousand persons; and trifling presents of money to near two thousand of the poor.

About twenty years ago Jūyū-Narayūnū-Ghoshalū, of Kiddūrpoorū, near Calcutta, expended 25,000 roopees at this place: when he sacrificed twenty-five buffaloes, one hundred and eight goats, and five sheep; and presented to the goddess four silver arms, two gold eyes, and many gold and silver ornaments.

About ten years ago, a merchant from the east of Bengal expended 5,000 roopees on the worship of this goddess, beside the price of a thousand goats which were slaughtered.

In the year 1810, a bramhūn from the east of Bengal expended on this idol about four thousand roopees, with part of which he bought a golden necklace, the beads of which were in the shape of giants' skulls.

In the year 1811, Gopēē-mohūnū, a bramhūn of Calcutta, expended ten thousand roopees in the worship of this goddess; but, being a voishnūvū, he did not offer any bloody sacrifices.

The Hindoos, it seems, are not the only persons who worship this black stone: I have received accounts several times of Europeans, or their native mistresses, going to this

temple, and expending thousands of roopees in offerings. The bramhūn with whom I wrote this account declares, that when he was a student at Vūriṣha, near Kalēē-ghatū, he several times saw the wives of Europeans come in palanqueens with offerings; though I suppose these ladies were born in India. But the proprietors of the temple positively assured this bramhūn, (as he says,) that very frequently European men presented offerings, soliciting some favour at the hands^u of the goddess; and that very lately a gentleman in the Hon. Company's service, who had gained a cause at law, presented thank-offerings to Kalēē which cost two or three thousand roopees^x. I confess that I very reluctantly insert these accounts, because I should hope they mostly originate in wilful misrepresentation on the part of the bramhūns of the temple, or in mistake. I suppose some Portuguese (who also go by the name Sahéb) may present offerings, and pray to this goddess—hence one source of misinformation; the mistresses of Europeans are supplied with money by their retainers, and hence the worship not unfrequently passes off, with many a triumph over degraded Christianity, as the worship of such a European; and many Europeans, who go for curiosity to see the temple and the image, inconsiderately or wantonly give presents to the clamorous and greedy bramhūns, who proclaim it as an offering to their goddess. Actions the most innocent, (even going to view the image,) are construed by these ignorant idolaters into an approval of idolatry. A

^u Silver hands, and gold tongues and eyes are among the presents made by rich men to this goddess. Such is the stupidity of idolaters.

^x It is probable, that the real worshipper in this instance was a head-servant of this gentleman's; though the expense might be defrayed by the master. Without thinking of the guilt of such conduct, I have known frequent instances of Europeans making presents to their servants for the avowed purpose of idol worship.

European who was lately there, says my informant, to make a drawing of the image, when he departed gave the officiating bramhūn a gold mohūr, and this present was probably enrolled among the gifts to the temple.

It is further affirmed, that many Mūsūlmans (four or five hundred) present offerings to Kalēē monthly—so strangely has the veneration for this image seized the minds of the natives! And it is added, that an equal number of prostitutes, from all parts of Bengal, pay their devotions at this temple: some pray for the health of their paramours, and others that great numbers may visit their houses of ill fame. It is not uncommon for a loose female to say to her paramour, after his recovery from sickness, ‘I made vows to Kalēē, that if she would restore you to health, I would present her with such and such offerings: you are recovered; and I must now go and perform my vows.’ Such a female sometimes thus prays for her paramour—‘O mother Kalee! I pray for ———. If thou wilt increase his wealth, [or remove sickness from him—or make him successful in such a concern—or increase his attachment to me, that he may always follow my advice] I will present to thee all these offerings [here she repeats the names of what she intends to give].’ When she returns home she takes off all her ornaments, laying them aside till her vow be either fulfilled or abandoned.

Merchants^y and tradesmen present offerings to Kalēē once, twice, or thrice a year, to obtain success in their concerns;—many rich men (thirty or forty) place bramhūns at this temple to worship the goddess, to walk round the

^y Hindoo merchants engaged in foreign commerce, after the successful voyage of a ship in which they had property, frequently present thank-offerings to this goddess.

temple, and read the Chündēē, daily in their names;—others place bramhūns here for these purposes, for two or three months in the year;—sepoys from all parts of Hindoost'hanū resort to this temple as often as they can obtain leave of absence;—mothers present offerings, praying for the recovery of their children, and promising to bring the restored child in their arms when they come to fulfil their vows^z; or, that it shall be invested with the poita^a, or pass through some other ceremony at the temple;—servants in search of employment make vows to the goddess to present her with a month's wages, if she will raise them to such a situation;—in a word, the occasions of drawing people to this famous temple are as endless as the superstitious hopes and fears, the crimes and the wants of the worshippers.

Goats are devoted to Kalēē, and kept, in some cases, for a long time, till the owner be able to meet the other expenses attending the offerings and worship. These animals are called the goats of Kalēē.

The village of Kalēē-ghüttū (or Kalēē-ghatū) owes the greater part of its present population to this temple; from which near two hundred persons derive their subsistence, exclusive of the proprietors, who amount to about thirty families. Some proprietors have a day in turn, others half a day, and others two or three hours; to whom all the

^z The hair of some children is not cut at all till the vow be fulfilled; others only separate a lock of the child's hair, tying it up in a bunch. A large hillock of human hair, collected at the times of shaving when vows have been fulfilled, is formed near the temple.

^a A bramhūn once assured me, that he had seen not less than three hundred boys invested with the poita in one day at this place; on which occasion many bloody sacrifices were offered. The concourse of people was immense.

offerings presented in the portion of time thus apportioned belong. All these families have become rich.

In the month Maghū, a festival is held in various places of Bengal in honour of Ghatoo, the god who presides over blotches on the skin; but the assembly at Kalēē-ghatū is very great. At the time of swinging in Choitrū also, the concourse of people at this place is also very large. See the account of Shivū.

I here add a rough account of what is expended on this idol monthly:—

	Rs.	As.	P.
Buffaloes slain, (5) - - - - -	30	0	0
Goats ditto, (1000) - - - - -	800	0	0
Sheep ditto, (30) - - - - -	40	0	0
Rice, (200 cwt.) - - - - -	440	0	0
Salt, Spices, Pease, Fish, &c. - - - - -	200	0	0
Clarified Butter, - - - - -	7	0	0
Milk and Curds, - - - - -	5	0	0
Sugar, (11 cwt.) - - - - -	105	0	0
Sweetmeats, (22 cwt.) - - - - -	360	0	0
Plantains, (25,000) - - - - -	50	0	0
Evening offerings, - - - - -	60	0	0
Meat offerings, - - - - -	90	0	0
Dressed food, - - - - -	80	0	0
Fees, - - - - -	233	0	0
Travelling Expenses, - - - - -	300	0	0
Alms given to the poor by visitors, - - - - -	200	0	0
Extraordinaries from rich men, and at festivals,	3000	0	0
	Sa. Rs. 6000	0	0

Seventy-two Thousand Roopees annually, or Nine Thousand Pounds sterling.

SECT. XX.—*Other Forms of Kalēē, &c.*

Chamūnda^b.—This image, which is similar to that of Kalēē, except that Chamūnda is represented with two giants' heads in her hands, and as sitting on a dead body, is seldom or never made. The goddess is worshipped at the festival of Doorga, on three different days.

Shmūshanū-Kalēē^c.—When this image is made, other figures are introduced, as those of the giants Shoombhū and Nishoombhū, of jackals, dead bodies, &c. These giants are represented as sitting on elephants, throwing arrows at the goddess; while the latter is standing on her husband, and aiming blows at them with a sword. The ceremonies of worship are like those performed in honour of Kalēē: the worship begins at the total wane of the moon in Maghū, and continues for three nights. Revelling is carried to the greatest pitch: some of the worshippers, and not unfrequently the sons of rich men, dance before the image naked, 'glorying in their shame.' A few Hindoos adopt this goddess as their guardian deity.

Manūvū-Kalēē^d.—Another form of Kalēē, whose image it resembles except in the colour, which is blue. The worship is celebrated on the fifteenth night of the decrease of the moon in Maghū:—the present fruit, diversion;—and hereafter, heaven. Such are the ideas of the poor deluded Hindoos. A whole village sometimes joins to defray the

^b She who seized Chūndū and Mūndū, two giants.

^c This name denotes, that Kalēē dwells in the place of burning the dead, and presides over cemeteries. Shmūshanū means a cemetery.

^d Viz. in the form of man.

expense, at other times a rich man bears it alone. Many bloody sacrifices are offered, and a great shew made, especially with illuminations; to which are added dancing, singing, music, &c.

Phūlū-hūrēē^e.—This form of Kalēē is that of a black female, with four arms, standing on the breast of Shivū. She is worshipped at the total wane of the moon in the month Jyoisht'hū, or in any other month, at the pleasure of the worshipper. The offerings are numerous, especially of fruits: and buffaloes, goats, and sheep, are sacrificed. The day after the worship, the image is thrown into the river.

Bhūdrū-Kalēē^f.—An image similar to that of Kalēē; the worship also resembles that which is paid to that goddess. The image is in some places preserved, and worshipped daily.

Oogrū-chūnda^g is worshipped at the total wane of the moon in the month Kartikū: in some places temples made of clay are erected in honour of this goddess, in which she is worshipped either daily or monthly.

Anūndū-mūyēē^h.—A black female, with four arms, sitting on a throne; to whom a number of temples are dedicated, containing stone or clay images of the goddess. She is worshipped daily; also on fortunate days, at the pleasure of her numerous disciples; as well as at the great festivals of Doorga, Kalēē, &c. when bloody sacrifices are offered to her.

^e She who receives much fruit.

^f The beneficent.

^g The furious.

^h The joyful.

*Nūvū-pūtrika*ⁱ.—These nine goddesses are worshipped at the great festivals, but with the greatest shew at that of Doorga; when these assistants of Doorga in her wars are represented by nine branches of different trees: Rūmbha, by a plantain^k; Kūchwēē-rōōpa, by a kūchwēē^l; Hūridra, by a hūridra^m; Jūyūntēē, by a jūyūntēēⁿ; Vilwarōōpa, by a vilwū^o; Darimēē, by a darimū^p; Ūshoka, by an ūshokū^q; Manūka, by a manū^r; and Dhanyū-rōōpa, by a dhanyū^s.

Bhēēmū-chūndēē^t.—This image is made and worshipped at Benares: in Bengal also the goddess is worshipped, especially on a Tuesday, before another image, or a pan of water, or some appointed representative of an idol.

Upūra-jīta^u.—There is no public festival in honour of this goddess, nor is her image set up for worship; but in times of sickness she is worshipped before the shalgramū, when forms of praise from the Tūntrūs are addressed to her.

Vimūla^x.—A stone image of this idol is worshipped in one of the temples erected in Orissa, near the famous temple of Jūgūnnat'hū. Bloody sacrifices are offered to this goddess; but as this place is sacred to Vishnoo, these offerings are made in secret. Vimūla is also worshipped in Bengal at the festivals of Doorga and Kalēē.

Siddhēshwūrēē^y.—In many villages in Bengal one, and

ⁱ The nine goddesses. ^k Musa paradisaica. ^l Arum esculentum.
^m Curcuma longa. ⁿ Æschynomene seshan. ^o Ægle marmelos.
^p Punica granatum. ^q Jonesia asoca. ^r Arum macrorrhizon.
^s Coriandrum sativum. ^t The terrific. ^u The unconquerable.
^x She who purifies. ^y She who fulfils the wishes of her worshippers.

in some large villages several of these images are set up. They are in general made of clay; but some are of stone. The image is commonly the property of one family, who worship her every day: others in the village worship her when they choose; but all the gifts and offerings come to the person who owns the image. If a child have a fever, the parents worship the goddess that it may recover, and promise to present various offerings to her if she be propitious. If a woman want a son, she procures a bramhūn to worship the goddess in her name;—if another person be seeking employment, he prays the goddess to favour him;—if a koolinū bramhūn wish his daughter to be married, he intercedes with the goddess, and promises to celebrate her worship if she be favourable. On all occasions of particular distress or want, the people resort to these images with their presents and vows. Thieves also worship Siddheshwūrē, that they may be favoured with her smiles and be protected in thieving^z. Honest and poor people also worship this image to obtain protection from thieves. An annual festival is held in honour of Siddheshwūrē on the same day as the Shyama festival.



SECT. XXI.—*Lākshṃē*

Is called the goddess of prosperity: she is painted yellow, and sits on the water-lily, holding in her right hand the pashū, (a rope,) and in the left a necklace.

^z The goddess Laverna, it is well known, was the protectress of thieves, who, from her, were named Laverniones, and who worshipped her, that their designs and intrigues might be successful: her image was a head without a body.

Vishnoo is said to have obtained this goddess at the churning of the sea^a; at which time all the gods were so charmed with her beauty that they desired to possess her, and Shivũ was entirely overcome by his passion. The reader will remember something similar to this in the account of Venus, who is also said to have sprang from the froth of the sea; and whom, on being presented to the gods, they all desired to marry.

The worship of Lũkshmẽe is celebrated in five different months, viz. in Bhadrũ, on the first Thursday of the increase of the moon, in the morning; in Ashwinũ, at the full moon, in the evening; in Kartikũ, on the last day of the decrease of the moon, in the night; on the last day in Poushũ, in the morning; and in Choitrũ, on the first Thursday of the increase of the moon, either in the day or night. The ceremonies are performed before a basket used as a corn-measure, painted red: the worshippers fill this measure with rice in the husk, and put round it a garland of flowers; then cover it with a white cloth; and, encircling it with a number of small shells, place before it a box containing red paint, a comb, &c. The officiating bramhũn performs the usual ceremonies, varying but little from those at the worship of Vishnoo, in the name of the master or mistress of the house. No bloody sacrifices are offered. Bramhũns are entertained rather liberally at this festival; but on the day of worship no alms must be given to the poor, (except cooked food,) nor any money lost; lest this goddess, who is supposed to preside over wealth, and to have taken up her abode at the worshipper's house, should be angry at her riches being wasted.

This worship is celebrated in almost every Hindoo family

^a She is also called the daughter of Bhrigoo.

five times a year; the frequency of which is not to be wondered at, when it is considered that Lūkshmēē is the goddess of prosperity. If a man be growing rich, the Hindoos say, 'Lūkshmēē is gone to abide at his house;' if he be sinking into poverty, they say, 'Lūkshmēē has forsaken him.' If they wish to abuse another, they call him Lūkshmēē-chara^b.

The morning after the festival, the women take up the corn-measure, and preserve it for some future time of worship: the rice is used in worship during the whole year. At the close of the festival, if a female of the family remember any stories respecting Lūkshmēē, she relates them; and the rest of the family, joined by two or three neighbouring females, sit around and hear. In some places a number of persons subscribe towards the expense of making an image of Lūkshmēē, and worship it on any of the days before-mentioned.

Names. Lūkshmēē, or, the goddess of fortunate signs;—Pūdmalūya, she who dwells on the water-lily;—Pūdma, she who who holds in her hand the water-lily;—Shrēē, she in whom all take refuge;—Hūree-priya, the wife of Hūree.



SECT. XXII.—*Kojagūrū-Lūkshmēē*^c.

THIS form of Lūkshmēē is worshipped at the full moon in Ashwinū, in the evening, before a corn-measure, sur-

^b In the provincial dialect it is Lūkhēē-chara, that is, luckless; thus forming an extraordinary coincidence of sound and meaning in languages so extremely different.

^c The shastrūs have commanded that each Hindoo shall remain awake during the night of the full moon in Ashwinū, when a festival is held in honour of this goddess; and from this circumstance this name is derived.

rounded by four plantain trees ; though some persons worship this goddess before an image of Lūksmēē. Bloody sacrifices are offered. The worshippers invariably drink the water of the cocoa-nut at this festival ; and numbers keep awake the whole night, listening to the filthy songs, and the horrid din of Hindoo music.



SECT. XXIII.—*Sūrūswītēē.*

THIS is the goddess of learning, the daughter of Brūmha, and the wife of Vishnoo. She is represented as a white woman, standing on the water-lily, and playing on a lute.

On the 5th day of the increase of the moon, in Maghū, the worship of this goddess is performed before her image, or a pen, inkstand, and book ; the latter articles are supposed to form a proper substitute for the goddess, who is called Vagvadinēē, the eloquent. The image is placed on a table, either at the west or south side of the house. After the officiating bramhūn has read the formulas and presented the offerings, each worshipper whose name has been read in the service takes flowers in his hands, and, repeating a prayer, presents them to the goddess ; after which follow gifts to the bramhūns, and a feast.

Every Hindoo who is able to read and write endeavours to celebrate the worship of this goddess : the raja of Būrdwan is said to expend 15,000 roopees annually at this festival. In every Hindoo college, the students keep the festival with great joy : many of them dance naked, and are guilty of every indecency.

The day after the festival, the image is carried in procession through the town, and then thrown into the river. In passing through the streets of Serampore, at the time of this festival in the year 1806, I was exceedingly shocked at observing among the crowd, who were dancing, playing on music, bearing flags, &c. two or three young men quite naked, the mob triumphing in this shocking insult on public decency. To induce young men to resort to their houses, many prostitutes keep this feast, and connect with it all that low merriment which corrupts the mind and draws the attention of the crowd^d.

On this day the Hindoos neither read nor write^e, though they will do any other secular business. They eat only once during the day, and those who are accustomed to eat fish abstain from it on this day.

The Hindoos believe, that from this goddess they derive their learning and powers of eloquence^f, as well as their ability to read and write. Some of those who can neither read nor write, insist upon it, that they ought to worship her, as they derive their powers of speech from

^d In the year 1808, I saw a group of performers reciting the Ramayünü in the street, and on enquiry I found it was before the door of some prostitutes, who had subscribed to bear the expense. The reason assigned was, that it would be an act of merit, helping them in another world; and would also draw men into whoredom. Offerings are sometimes brought home, and shared by a prostitute with her paramour; like the harlot, in the Book of Proverbs, who is represented as saying to the young man she met in the street, 'I have peace-offerings with me; this day have I payed my vows.' *Prov. vii. 14.*

^e The only reason I can find for this is, it is the command of the shastrü.

^f Of an eloquent man the Hindoos say, 'Sürüsütēē sits on his tongue.'

her^s. Others however complain, 'Sūrūswūtēē has bestowed nothing on us—why should we perform her worship?'

The image of Sūrūswūtēē is sometimes painted blue, and placed in temples; when she is called Nēelū-Sūrūswūtēē.

Names. Bramhēē, or, the daughter of Brūmha;—Bharūtēē, she who presides over words;—Bhasha, she who bestows the power of speech;—Sūrūswūtēē, she who through the curse of a bramhūn was turned into a river.



SECT. XXIV.—*Shēētūla*^h

Is painted as a yellow woman sitting on the water-lily, dressed in red, and giving suck to an infant. Before this image, or a pan of water, the worship of this goddess is performed, in any part of the year; but in general on the 7th, 8th, and 9th of the increase of the moon, in the day time. Bloody sacrifices are not offered. On the 10th the image is thrown into the water.

This goddess is also worshipped to obtain preservation from the evil effects of the small-pox. In the months Choitrū and Voishakhū the Hindoos inoculate those of their children who are two years old; on which occasion the ino-

^s Of this fact they give the example of Ravūnū, who, when Ramū was about to kill him, procured a reprieve by flattering his adversary; but the gods, afraid lest Ravūnū should be spared, sent Sūrūswūtēē into his throat, and caused him to say provoking things to Ramū.

^h Or, she who cools the body at the time of the small-pox.

culating bramhūnⁱ presents offerings and prayers to this goddess in the name of the child, promising for the parents, that if she be kind to the child, they will present to her certain offerings, &c. as soon as it is recovered. At the close of the ceremony, the bramhūn places the flowers which have been offered in the hair of the child, telling the parents that the goddess will be favourable; and then performs the operation. When the child becomes affected with the disease, the family priest (if the parents be rich enough to pay for it) comes to the house every day, and repeats certain forms of prayer and praise to Shēētūla; after recovery she is again worshipped. If the child become dangerously ill, it is carried to an image of Shēētūla, and bathed in the water which has been offered to this goddess, some of which is given it to drink.

Beggars of different descriptions procure a stone, gild a small part of it, and carry it from place to place, singing the praises of Shēētūla. These mendicants sometimes proclaim in a village, that Shēētūla has appeared to one of them in a dream, and ordered, that in this village the mistress of each house shall beg at three, four, or more doors, and take whatever is given her, and eat it in some neighbouring garden or forest^k. The most dreadful misfortunes being threatened in case of disobedience, the affrighted women beg from door to door, and fulfil the supposed commands of the goddess.

ⁱ The regular Hindoo doctors (voidyū) do not inoculate, but a lower order of bramhūns called doivūgnūs, or astrologers.

^k This is a trick to extort some part of the alms from these deluded women.

SECT. XXV.—*Mūnūsa*¹.

THIS goddess, the sister of Vasookee^m, and the wife of Jūrūtkaṛū, a sage, is called the queen of the snakes, and is worshipped to obtain preservation from their bite. She is represented as sitting on the water-lily, clothed with snakes.

In the month Jyoist'hū, on the 10th of the increase of the moon; also on the 5th of the moon's increase and decrease in Ashwinū and Shravūnū, as well as on the last day of Shravūnū, this goddess is worshipped. On the three last occasions, the worshippers plant branches of the Euphorbia before the house, and worship them. In Shravūnū the worship is celebrated with the greatest shew; on which occasion an image, or some branches of the same tree, or a pan of water surrounded with snakes made of clay, is placed as the object of worship: in some places, twenty or thirty thousand people assemble; and amidst singing, dancing, music, &c. some persons play with snakes of different kinds, particularly the cobra capello, suffering them to bite them. This play, however, ends fatally when the venomous fangs have not been carefully extracted. The cast called Mal, who play with snakes for a livelihood, profess great regard for Mūnūsa. On the days of the festival, the Hindoos do not kindle a fire, alleging that one of the names of Mūnūsa is Ūrūndhūna, she who does not cook. A day or two before the festival, in some places, the women of the village (perhaps fifty or a hundred, or even two hundred) beg rice, either in their own or an adjoining vil-

¹ Or, Mūnūsa-dévēē; the goddess who possesses pleasure in herself.

^m The king of the serpents.

lage; which they offer, in a field in the neighbourhood, in the name of Mūnūsa, but without an image. After thus offering rice, milk, curds, sugar, &c. to the goddess, they eat them on the spot; and this act of holiness, they say, preserves their children from the bite of snakes, as well as assists the parents themselves on their way to heaven. A song founded upon the following story concludes the whole:—Chandū, a merchant, not only refused to worship the goddess, but professed the utmost contempt for her. In process of time, however, she caused his six youngest sons to be killed by the bite of snakes: to avoid the fate of whom, the eldest son, Lūkindūrū, made an iron house, and retired to it; yet Mūnūsa caused the snake Tūkshūkū to enter by a crevice, which destroyed Lūkindūrū on his wedding-day: his widow escaped, and went weeping into the presence of her mother-in-law. The neighbours again attempted to reason with Chandū; but he continued obstinate, declaring that Mūnūsa was no goddess. She appeared to people in dreams, and commanded them to persuade him to celebrate her worship; and, after much entreaty, to pacify the goddess, he was induced to comply: but declared he would present the offerings only with the left hand^a; and, turning back his head, he threw a flower at her image with the left hand. Mūnūsa, however, was so pleased, that she restored his seven sons; and from this circumstance, the worship of this goddess has since been very much celebrated.

When the worship is performed before an image, sheep, goats, and buffaloes are offered to Mūnūsa, and even swine^o.

^a The hand used in washing after stools.

^o Among the Egyptians swine, it is well known, were offered to Bacchus.

When a Hindoo has been bitten by a snake, the persons who pretend to cure him read different incantations containing the names of Mūnūsa. If one or two persons in a village have died by the bite of snakes, all the inhabitants become alarmed, and celebrate the worship of Mūnūsa.



SECT. XXVI.—*Shūshṭēē*^p

Is a yellow woman sitting on a cat, nursing a child. The Hindoos regard her as the protectress of their children.

Six annual festivals are held in honour of this goddess, viz. in Jyoisht'hū, Bhadrū, Ashwinū, Maghū, and two in Choitrū; on the 6th of the increase of the moon, and on the last day but one of the month.

The worship celebrated in Jyoisht'hū is performed by a bramhūnēē, or an officiating bramhūn, under the vūtū tree^q, or under a branch of this tree planted in the house. At the time of this worship, every woman of the village, dressed in her best clothes, with her face painted, her ornaments on, and her body anointed with oil, goes to the place of worship under the tree, taking in her hand an offering; over each of which the officiating bramhūn performs the usual ceremonies. The offerings are sent to the house of the officiating bramhūn, or distributed amongst the eager by-standers. Among others who are eager to obtain some of these offerings, are women who have not been blessed with children; each of whom sits down pensively among the crowd, and

^p She is worshipped on the sixth lunar day.

^q Ficus Indica.

opens the end of her garment to receive what the assembled mothers are eager enough to bestow : when the giver says, 'May the blessing of Shūshtēē be upon you, and next year may you bring offerings—with a child in your arms.' The receiver adds with eagerness, 'Ah! if she bestow this blessing, I will celebrate her worship; I will keep my vows, and bring offerings every year.' This festival is called Arūnyū-shūshtēē, because the worshippers are directed to walk in some forest on this day, with fans in their hands.

In those houses where the daughter is married, but has not left her parents, they send for the son-in-law; and at the close of the worship the girl's father sends to him, on a metal plate, a flower, some unhusked rice, a piece of string consecrated to the goddess, five or six blades of dōrva grass, a garment, &c. The son-in-law, if a person of respectability, contents himself with sticking the flower in his hair. If a poor man, he puts on the garment, and raises all the other presents to his head. If the son-in-law neglect to stick the flower in his hair, the girl's father becomes very sorrowful; and all the spectators pronounce the former a dead man, for throwing away a flower which has been offered to Shūshtēē.

The worship in the month Bhadrū does not differ from the preceding, except in its being performed by the river side, or at a pool of water, before the stick which is whirled round in churning butter, upon which a fan is placed. In the midst of the worship the women make little paste images of children, and, placing them on leaves of the küntūkēē tree^r, present them to the goddess, and afterwards

^r *Artocarpus integrifolia.*

throw them into the river. This festival is called Chapūra-shūshtēē^s.

The Ashwinū festival, distinguished by the name Doorga-shūshtēē, is in almost every particular the same as the preceding.

At the Maghū festival, called Shēētūla-shūshtēē, the women, on the night preceding, boil a large quantity of rice and pulse for offerings; mixing with the latter, in boiling, a kind of kidney beans and varttakoos^t. The next morning they bathe very early, and on their return go through the ceremonies of worship in the house, before the two stones with which they grind their spices; and upon which they throw a yellow cloth, smeared with red lead. The worship is finished before ten o'clock, and at noon they eat what the goddess has left, i. e. every thing they gave her.

The two festivals in Choitrū are held on the 6th, and on the last day but one of the month: on the 6th, in the morning, either before a branch of the vūtū, the shalgramū, or some proper representative of an image; and at the close of the month, in the evening, before an image of Shivū. On the 6th the worshippers eat the bud of the Euphorbia inclosed in a plantain; and at the latter festival they fast during the day, and after worship eat some fruit, and some barley flour mixed with curds or water. Rich persons eat sweetmeats. These festivals are called Ūshokū-shūshtēē and Nēelū-shūshtēē.

^s In allusion to the making of these images.

^t The fruit of solanum melongena.

Another festival is held in honour of this goddess in some parts of Bengal, in the month Ūgrūhayññ, called Hūree-shūshtēē. The worship is celebrated before a clay pot, filled with water, having six spouts.

In addition to all these times of worship, females who have lost all their children by death, worship this goddess every month: beside which, after a child is six days old, every father, to preserve the child, performs the worship of the goddess, while the officiating bramhññ reads the incantations; and on the 21st day of the child's age, the mother presents offerings to the goddess with her own hands, while the officiating bramhññ reads the prayers. The first of these ceremonies takes place in the evening, before a branch of the vñtñ tree, fastened in the house floor; the two stones with which spices are ground being placed against the wall in the inside of the house, covered with a piece of cloth. The husband, at the close, asks the blessing of the goddess on the child, promising to present to her a number of offerings when the child shall be twenty-one days old. Before the door the family place the skull of a cow, rubbing some red lead on its forehead; and in three lumps of cow-dung, put on the forehead, they stick three cowries; upon which also they spread a yellow cloth. The head remains a month at the door of the house, as a kind of charm for the good of the children.

On the 21st day of the child's age, the mother invites ten or fifteen female neighbours, who, with the officiating bramhññ, accompany her to a stone placed at the foot of the vñtñ tree, which is supposed to be the representative of the goddess; around which they put a large necklace or garland of flowers, and go through the ceremonies of worship in the usual manner: at the close the mother promises,

on condition that the goddess bless her child, that she will worship her every year. The mother distributes the sweetmeats, &c. that have been offered to the idol among the females present. This festival is called ékooshiya^u.

Shūshtēē has no temples in Bengal; her common representative, a rough stone, smeared with red paint, about as large as a man's head, is commonly placed at the root of the sacred vūtū; to which passengers, especially women, pay a degree of reverence. In fulfilling particular vows to Shūshtēē, some worshippers surround the vūtū tree with garlands of flowers, and great numbers of artificial lamps made of clay: others fulfil their vows by building an earthen or brick seat around one of these trees. A female of property, as a thank-offering after child-birth, presents by the hands of a bramhūn a child made of curds, which the bramhūn never fails to devour.

Bloody sacrifices of bullocks, goats, sheep, and sometimes of tame hogs, are offered to Shūshtēē. For receiving these latter offerings some persons call the goddess a cannibal.

At the close of the different festivals held in honour of Shūshtēē, it is common for women to entertain the company with marvellous stories relating to this goddess. The wives of some of the lower casts beg for a share of the offerings at the doors of the bramhūns.

Shūshtēē rides on a cat: hence the Hindoos, especially mothers, avoid hurting this animal, lest the goddess should revenge herself on their children.

^u From ékooshū, twenty-one.

CHAP. IV.

INFERIOR CELESTIAL BEINGS, OBJECTS OF
WORSHIP.

THESE beings are either the enemies of the gods, as the ũsoorŭs and rakshŭsŭs; or their companions; or those who are employed as dancers, singers, or musicians in the heavens of the gods. They are worshipped at the great festivals, but have no separate images.

SECT. I.—*The Usoorŭs, or Giants.*

THESE enemies of the gods are the offspring of Kŭsh-yŭpŭ, the progenitor of gods, giants, men, serpents, and birds, by his different wives. They bear a resemblance to the titans or giants of the Grecian Mythology; and stories of their wars with the gods (some of which will be found in this work) abound in the pooranŭs. Indrŭ, Vishnoo, Kartikŭ, and Doorga, are distinguished among the Hindoo deities for their conflicts with these beings^a. King Vŭlee, a giant, is worshipped by the Hindoos on their birth-days, with the same forms as are used in the worship of the gods.

^a Jupiter was represented as aiming the thunder in his right hand against a giant under his feet: Doorga is aiming the spear in her right hand against an ũsoorŭ under her feet.

Story of the churning of the sea by the gods and ũsoorŭs.—The most rancorous hatred has always existed betwixt the ũsoorŭs and the gods, although half-brothers; the former having been excluded by the gods from succeeding to the throne of heaven: and dreadful conflicts were carried on betwixt them with various success, till both parties sought to become immortal. The giants performed the most severe religious austerities, addressing their prayers alternately to Vishnoo, Shivŭ, and Brŭmha; but were always unsuccessful. The gods, however, at last obtained this blessing at the churning of the sea of milk; which story is related at length in the Mŭhabharŭtŭ and other works:—The gods first took mount Mŭndŭrŭ, placed it in the sea, and wrapping round it the serpent Vasookēē, began to whirl it round as the milk-men do the staff in making butter. The gods took hold of the head of the snake, and the giants of the tail; but being almost consumed by the poison from the mouth of the serpent, the gods privately entreated Vishnoo to prevail upon the giants to lay hold of the head; upon which he thus addressed them: ‘How is it,’ said Vishnoo, ‘that you, giants as you are, have taken hold of Vasookēē’s tail?’ The gods and the giants then changed places; and the elephant Oiravŭtŭ first arose from the churned sea to reward their labours; afterward the gem Koustoobhŭ—the horse Oochoishrŭva—the tree Parijatu—many jewels—the goddess Lukshmēē—and then poison. Full of alarm at this sight, the gods applied to Mŭha-dēvŭ (Shivŭ); who, to save the world from destruction, drank up the poison, and received no other injury than a blue mark on his throat^b. Next came up the water of immortality; when the 330,000,000 gods, and the ũsoorŭs without number, took their stand on each side, each claiming the mighty

^b Hence this god is called Neelŭ-kantŭ, the blue-throated.

boon. Vishnoo proposed to divide it with his own hands : but while the ũsoorũs went to prepare themselves by bathing in the sacred stream, the gods drank up the greatest part of the nectar; and, to give them time to drink the whole, Vishnoo assumed the form of a most captivating female; with which the giants were so charmed, that they totally forgot the nectar. One of them, however, having changed his shape, mixed with the gods, and, drinking of the water of life, became immortal; but Vishnoo, being informed of this circumstance by Sōōryũ and Chũndrũ, (the sun and moon,) cut off the head of the giant. The head and trunk, being thus immortalized, were made the ascending and descending nodes, under the names Rahoo and Kétoo.



SECT. II.—*The Rakshũsũs.*

MANY stories respecting the wars of the rakshũsũs, or cannibals, with the gods, are contained in the pooranũs and other shastrũs, and several will be found in different parts of this work. They are represented as assuming at pleasure the different shapes of horses, tygers, lions, buffaloes, &c.: some have a hundred heads, and others as many arms*. In the Hindoo writings Malēē, Soomalēē, Ravũnũ, Koombhũ-kũrnũ, Vibhēēshũnũ, Indrũ-jit, Ũtikayũ, and others, are distinguished as renowned rakshũsũs. As soon as born, these giants are said to arrive at maturity. They devour their enemies. All the rakshũsũs are bramhũns, and are said to dwell in the S. W. corner of the earth.

* Some of the giants of the Grecian mythology, it will be remembered, had a hundred arms.

Noiritū, a rakshūsū, is one of the ten guardian deities of the earth, and presides in the S. W. In this character he is worshipped at all the great festivals. He is represented in the form of meditation used by the bramhūns as a black man, having in his right hand a scimitar.

Story of Koombhū-kūrnū.—Immediately after his birth, this cannibal stretched his arms, which were in proportion to his body, and gathered into his mouth every thing within his reach. At one time he seized five hundred courtezans belonging to Indrū; at another the wives of one hundred sages, and cows and bramhūns without number. Brūmha at length threatened to destroy him, unless he contented him with less, as he would presently eat up the earth. He now became more moderate, and began to perform the most severe austerities in honour of Brūmha; which he continued for ten thousand years. The gods trembled on their thrones, lest Koombhū-kūrnū, obtaining the blessing of Brūmha, and especially the blessing of immortality, should swallow up every thing, gods and men. They appealed to Brūmha, and persuaded Sūrūswūtēē, the goddess of learning, to enter into Koombhū-kūrnū, and excite him to ask this blessing, that he should continue to sleep day and night; which request Brūmha granted, and sent the voracious rakshūsū to enjoy his everlasting sleep. The friends of Koombhū-kūrnū however persuaded Brūmha to change his destiny: who now ordered that he should sleep uninterruptedly six months, but on the last day of the sixth should awake; during half of which day he should fight with and conquer Brūmha, Vishnoo, and Shivū, and during the other half be permitted to devour as much as he chose. At one meal he devoured six thousand cows, ten thousand sheep, ten thousand goats, five hundred buffaloes, five thousand deer, and drank four thousand hogsheads of

spirits, with other things in proportion. After all, he was angry with his brother Ravūnū, for not giving him enough to satisfy nature. His house is declared to have been twenty or thirty thousand miles long, and his bed the whole length of the house. 'Lūnka itself, says the Ramayūnū, is eight hundred miles in circumference:—where then was the place for this bed?' I have heard this question put by a person to the bramhūns, who, unable to find room for Koombū-kūrnū's bed, were laughed at by the shōōdrūs, their disciples.

The *Gūndhūrṽs* and *Kinnūrṽs* are celestial choiristers, male and female. The latter have horses' heads^d!!!

The *Vidyā-dhūrṽs* are male and female dancers. The *Upsūrṽs* are also female dancers, greatly celebrated for their beauty: they have been frequently sent down to earth to captivate the minds of religious devotees, and draw them from those works of merit which were likely to procure them the thrones of the gods. Eight of the ūpsūrṽs are mentioned as beyond all others beautiful: Oorvvūshēē, Ménūka, Rūmbha, Pūnchū-chōōra, Tilottūma, Ghritachēē, Boodbooda, and Mishrū-késhēē. The five first of these are the mistresses of the gods, and keep houses of ill-fame in the heaven of Indrū. When any one of the gods visits the king of heaven, he generally spends some time with one or more of these courtezans.

Story respecting the son of Indrū and an Upsūra.—On a certain occasion, many of the gods were invited to an entertainment at the palace of Indrū. In the midst of the

^d Some idea may be formed of the taste of the early Hindoo poets, who here represent heavenly music as coming from beings with the mouths of horses!

dance, Gūndhūrvū-senū, the son of Indrū, was fascinated with the charms of one of the ūpsūras; and behaved so indelicately, that his father commanded him to descend to the earth in the form of an ass. All the gods joined the son in endeavouring to appease the angry father; who ultimately directed that Gūndhūrvū-senū should be an ass in the day, and a man in the night: he promised his son too, that when Dhara, the king, should burn him, he should recover his place in heaven. With this modification of the curse, Gūndhūrvū-senū sunk to the earth, and alighted in the form of an ass near a pond at Dhara-nūgūrū. In the day the fallen son of Indrū remained in this form near the pond; and in the night, in that of a man, he wandered from place to place to appease his hunger. One day a bramhūn came to this pond to bathe; when Gūndhūrvū-senū told him that he was the son of Indrū, and requested him to speak to king Dharū, to give him his daughter in marriage. The bramhūn consented; but on speaking to the king, the latter refused to believe that he was Indrū's son, unless he himself had some conversation with him. The next day the king went, with his counsellors and courtiers, and held a conversation with the ass; who related his history, and the cause of his degradation: but the king still refused assent, unless he performed some miracle. To this the ass consented; and in one night raised a fort of iron forty miles square, and six high. The next day the king, seeing the fort finished, was obliged to consent, and to appoint the day of marriage. He invited bramhūns, kings, and other guests without number, to the wedding; and, on the day appointed, with dancing, songs, and a most splendid shew, (the bride being adorned with jewels and the richest attire,) they marched to the iron fort to give the beautiful daughter of king Dharū in marriage to the ass. In that country weddings are celebrated in the day. When all was

ready, they sent a bramhūn to call Gūndhūrvū-sénū from the pond; who, elated in the highest degree, having bathed, accompanied the bramhūn to the assembly. Hearing music and songs, Gūndhūrvū-sénū could not refrain from giving them an ass's tune: but the guests, hearing the braying of the ass, were filled with sorrow: some were afraid to speak their minds to the king; but they could not help whispering and laughing one amongst another, covering their mouths with their garments: others muttered to the king, 'O king, is this the son of Indrū? O great monarch! you have found an excellent bridegroom; you are peculiarly happy in having to give your daughter in marriage to the son of Indrū; don't delay the wedding; in doing good delay is improper; we never saw so glorious a wedding; we have heard of a camel being married to an ass, when the ass, looking upon the camel, said, 'Bless me! what a fine form!' and the camel, hearing the voice of the ass, said 'Bless me! what a sweet voice!'—The bramhūns continued: 'In that wedding, however, the bride and bridegroom were equal; but in this marriage, that such a bride should have such a bridegroom is truly wonderful!' Other bramhūns said, 'O king, at other weddings, as a sign of joy, the sacred shell is blown; but thou hast no need of that,' (alluding to the braying of the ass.) The females cried out, 'O mother! what is this! at the time of marriage to have an ass! What a miserable thing! What! will he give such an angelic female in marriage to an ass?'—The king, ashamed, held down his head. At length Gūndhūrvū-sénū began to converse with the king in Sūngskritū, and to urge him to the fulfilment of his promise; reminding him, that 'there was no act more meritorious than speaking truth, (putting the king in mind of his promise;) that the body was merely a garment, and that wise men never estimate the worth of a person by the clothes he wears: moreover, he was in this

shape from the curse of his father, and during the night he should assume the body of a man. Of his being the son of Indrũ there could be no doubt.' The minds of the guests were now changed, and they confessed, that though he had the outside of an ass, he was unquestionably the son of Indrũ; for it was never known that an ass could speak Sũngskritũ. The king, therefore, gave his daughter to him in marriage. By the time the guests were dismissed night drew on, when Gũndhũrvũ-sẽnũ assumed the form of a handsome man, and, having dressed himself, respectfully went into the presence of the king. All the people, seeing so fine a man, and recollecting that in the morning he would become an ass, felt both pleased and sorrowful. The king brought the bride in great state to the palace, and the next day gave her servants, camels, jewels, &c. and dismissed the guests with many presents. Dhara, however, in the midst of his other cares, could not but feel anxious that Gũndhũrvũ-sẽnũ should throw off his ass's body. After a thousand contrivances, he said to himself, 'Gũndhũrvũ-sẽnũ is the son of Indrũ; therefore he can never die: at night he casts off his ass's body, and it lies like a dead body: I will therefore burn this body, and thus keep him constantly in the shape of a man.' Accordingly, one night, he caused the ass's body to be burnt,—when Gũndhũrvũ-sẽnũ appeared in his presence, told him that now the curse was removed, and that he should immediately ascend to heaven. After saying this he withdrew, and the king saw him no more.

Nayikas.—These are female companions of Doorga, and are worshipped at the festivals of this goddess. Eight of them have a preeminence over the rest. The Tũntrũ-shastrũs declare, that these females visit the worshippers either as their wives, or as mothers; and declare to them

how they may obtain heaven: or, as sisters, bring to them any female they choose, and reveal whatever they desire to know of the present or future. He who wishes to obtain the company of a *Nayika* must worship her thrice a day, and repeat her name at night in a cemetery for seven, or fifteen, or thirty days. On the last night he must continue to repeat her name till she appears to him, and asks what he wishes for. She remains with him during the night, and departs the next morning, leaving with him presents to a large amount; which, however, he must expend the next day, or they will all evaporate. If the worshipper wishes to go to any place in the three worlds, the *Nayika* takes him thither in a moment. If after cohabiting with one of the *Nayikas*, he cohabit with any other female, the *Nayika* immediately destroys him. *Anūndū-chūndrū*, a *bramhūn* of *Soopoorū* in *Vēērū-bhōōmee*, who died only a few years since, is said to have obtained the fruit of his worshipping the *Nayikas*.

The *Yūksūś* are the servants of *Koovérū*, the god of riches, and fly through the world preserving the wealth of men. A number of stories, not worth detailing, principally referring to their wars or intrigues, are contained in the *pooranūs*. In the form of meditation, *Koovérū* is described as a white man, having a hammer in his right hand. He is worshipped at the festival of the goddess *Lūksmēē*, and at all the other great festivals; but has no separate feast, image, nor temple. The *Ramayūnū* relates that *Koovérū*, by prayer to *Brūmha*, accompanied with religious austerities, obtained *Lūnka*, (Ceylon;) the very mire of whose streets is gold. Here he reigned till *Ravūnū* dispossessed him. *Brūmha* also gave to this god the chariot *Poosh-pūkū*; which had the property of expansion, and of going wherever the charioteer wished. From *Lūnka*, *Koovérū*

went to mount Koilasū, where he is supposed to be at present.

Pishachūs.—These messengers of the gods guard the sacred places, the resort of pilgrims. Sixty thousand are said to guard the streams of the Ganges from the approach of the profane.

The *Goodghūkūs*, the *Siddhūs*, the *Bhōōtūs*, and the *Charūnūs*.—These are beings of inferior orders, residing with the gods as servants.

There are several other orders of females, as the *Yoginēēs*, *Dakinēēs*, *Kakinēēs*, *Shakhinēēs*, *Bhōōtinēēs*, and *Prétinēēs*, who wait upon Doorga or Shivū, as their attendants. All these also are worshipped at the great festivals.

CHAP. V.

OF THE TERRESTRIAL GODS.

THE Hindoo celestial goddesses, it will be seen, are very few. There are no more indeed than three which can be considered as really distinct, and as holding a distinguished place among this class of Hindoo deities: these are Doorga, Sūrśwītēē, and Lūkshmēē. Many of the others are different forms of Doorga; and Mūnśa, Shśhtēē, and Shēētūla, would have been placed among the terrestrial goddesses, but they do not seem to have had an earthly origin.—I now proceed to give an account of the terrestrial gods, some of whom are worshipped with more shew than any of the celestial deities.

SECT. I.—*Krishnū*.*

ACCORDING to the Shrēē-Bhagūvūtū, Mūhabharūtū, and other works, this god, a form of Vishnoo, was incarnate to destroy kings Shishoo-palū and Kūngśū, and a number of giants.

Krishnū was born at Mūt'hoora; his father's name was Vūsoo-dévū, a kshūtriyū, and his mother's Dēvūkēē; but Kūngśū seeking to destroy him when an infant, his father

* The black.

fled to Vūnda-vūnū, and concealed him in the house of Nūndū, a voishyū: hence he is sometimes called the son of Nūndū.

Many stories are recorded of Krishnū in the pooranūs: in his infancy he deprived a giant of her breath, who had poisoned her breasts before she gave him suck^f;—soon after he destroyed a carriage against which he hurt his foot, when laid by his nurse at the door to sleep^g;—Nūndū's wife, when looking into his mouth one day, had a surprising view of the three worlds, with Brūmha, Vishnoo, and Shivū sitting on their thrones;—at the age of eight years he took up mount Govūrdhūnū in his arms, and held it as an umbrella over the heads of the villagers and their cattle during a dreadful storm, with which the angry king of heaven was overwhelming them;—he created a number of cattle, and also of boys and girls, to replace those which Brūmha had *stolen* from Vrinda-vūnū;—he destroyed a large hydra, which had poisoned the waters of the Yūmoona;—he seduced the wife of Ayūnū-ghoshū, a voishyū, and sported with 16,000 milk-maids in the wilderness of Vrindū;—he next assumed four arms, destroyed Kūngsū, and placed Kūngsū's father on the throne;—after this he was engaged in various quarrels, and had to combat with many formidable enemies; which induced him to build a fort at Dwarūka, where he resided, and married two wives;—he next joined the family of Yoodhisht'hirū in their war with the race of Dooryodhūnū;—and, lastly, destroyed Shishoo-palū. He closed his life with an act worthy of such a character, by

^f It is common for a Hindoo nurse to offer the breast to a neighbour's child, when she happens to be on a visit.

^g Mothers frequently lay their infants exposed to the rays of the sun to sleep, after rubbing their breasts with oil.

destroying his whole progeny^h; and was at length himself accidentally killed by an arrow, while sitting under a tree.

It is very possible, if any real Hindoo history could be discovered, that many of these facts would be found recorded in the life of a Hindoo king of this name; which facts have been embellished by the Asiatic poets till they have elevated the hero into a god. The images of this lascivious and blood-stained hero are now worshipped by the Hindoos with an enthusiasm, which transforms them into the very image of Krishnū himself.

This god is represented as a black man, holding a flute to his mouth with both hands: his mistress Radha stands on his left.

On the 8th of the moon's decrease in the month Bhadrū, an annual festival is held in the night, to celebrate the

^h The posterity of Krishnū, say several pooranūs, were destroyed by the curse of a bramhūn; but as all events are ascribed to Krishnū by his votaries, this of destroying his own family is referred to his agency. So infamous is the character of this god, even among those who hope for salvation through him, that Vilwū-mūngūlū, a blind poet, wrote the following verse, which certainly contains the severest possible censure of this profligate deity:

‘Oh! Krishnū! thou who didst destroy thy own offspring;
Thou who didst renounce (Sēeta) the spotless daughter of Zūnūkū, in the
wilderness;
Thou who didst cast down to hades Vūlee, who had given thee his all;—
Who would think on thee, if thou wert not the deliverer from death?’

In exact agreement with this Sūngskritū verse, was the declaration made before several persons in company in the year 1812, by Ram-nat’hū, the second Sūngskritū pundit in the College of Fort-William; who, speaking of the universal profligacy of manners in Calcutta, declared, that ‘every house contained a Krishnū.’

birth of this god. On this day all the worshippers fast^e. The regular Hindoos, and the disciples of the Gosaees^f, sometimes differ a day or two in celebrating this feast. After the ceremonies of worship are concluded, the worshippers assemble before the temple near a hole cut in the ground, into which have been thrown water, oil, curds, turmeric, and earth; and seize first one person and then another, and throw them into this hole; and others jump into it. Music, dancing, singing obscene songs, &c. accompany these acts of rude merriment; at the close of which, dancing through the streets, the crowd go to some pool, or to the river, and wash themselves: and thus the festivity ends.

In the month Shravũnũ another festival is held in honour of Krishnũ, called Jhoolũnũ-yatra^g. On the 11th night of the increase of the moon this festival begins; when a chair or throne, containing the image, being suspended from the ceiling of an adjoining room in the temple, the proprietor begins to swing the image, and other bramhũn guests continue it at pleasure. At ten o'clock the god is taken to his usual place, when the different forms of worship are repeated, amidst the offering of flowers, incense, sweetmeats, fruits, and other acts of adoration. During the celebration of worship in the house, the crowd out of doors sing, dance,

^e In a Hindoo fast, the person abstains, for three days, from anointing himself with oil, from connubial intercourse, from fish, every thing fried, and eats only once a day. At the time of a Jewish fast, the person is said to have 'afflicted his soul:' but among the Hindoos fasting and merriment go together. The Jewish fast was connected with moral sentiment: the Hindoos fast as an act of mere ceremonial purity.

^f The Gosaees are the religious leaders of a large portion of the worshippers of Krishnũ. Gosace is a term of respect equivalent to Sir.

^g The swinging festival.

and make a horrid discord with barbarous instruments of music, connecting with the whole every kind of indecency. At twelve o'clock the owner of the image entertains a great multitude of bramhūns. After eating and drinking, they literally 'rise up to play:' youths, dressed so as to represent Krishnū and his mistress Radha, dance together; and the festivities are thus continued till the crowd retire at day-light. Some keep this feast for five nights, beginning on the eleventh; and others for three nights, beginning on the thirteenth.

On the 15th of the increase of the moon in the month Kartikū, another festival is held during three nights, to celebrate the revels of this impure god with the milk-maids. It is called the Rasū. Each night, after the ceremonies in the temple are closed, the crowd carry the image out with much noise, music, singing, and dancing; and place it in a brick building in the street, which is open on all sides, and has one highly elevated sitting place. This building is annually gilt, ornamented, and grandly illuminated for this festival. Sixteen small images of Krishnū are necessary on this occasion; but a very small gold image, about the size of a breast-pin, is placed as the object of adoration, and afterwards given to the officiating bramhūn. At the close of the festival, the clay images are thrown into the river.

Round the building in the street booths are erected, filled with sweetmeats, playthings, and other articles, as at an English fair. Here fathers and mothers, leading their children by the hand, or carrying them on their hips^h, come

^h This is the way in which all Hindoos carry their children: a child is rarely seen in a person's arms, as in Europe. The same custom appears to have existed among the Jews: 'Ye shall be borne upon her sides, and be dandled upon her knees.' *Isaiah* lxvi. 12.

for *fairings*. Thieves and gamblers are very busy at these timesⁱ; and upon the whole it is amazing how much a European is here reminded of an English race-ground. At these times I have seen the grey-headed idolater and the mad youth dancing together; the old man lifting up his withered arms in the dance, and giving a kind of horror to the scene, which idolatry itself, united to the vivacity of youth, would scarcely be able to inspire^k. In England the bait to corrupting amusements is merely a horse-race: but in Bengal the Hindoo is at once called to what he considers divine worship and to a licentious festival; no one imagining, but that worship and adultery may be performed in the same hour. About four or five in the morning the crowd carry the god back to the temple; and then retire to cure their hoarseness and rest their wearied bodies.

On the fourth morning, having brought the god home, after the usual ceremonies, they sing songs in celebration of the actions of Krishnũ; and continue them from ten till

ⁱ In the year 1810, on account of the depredations of preceding years, the magistrate of Serampore forbad the erection of booths and all games at this festival: in consequence of which an expense of near four hundred roopees, incurred in performing the ceremonies of worship, fell upon the owner of the image of Krishnũ, who would otherwise have received as much from the proprietors of the booths and gaming shops.

^k Illuminations, fireworks, and the gilding of their temples, give a very shewy effect to Hindoo ceremonies, which are often performed at the time of the full moon, and at midnight. A moon-light night in India is highly pleasant. At the time of the Rasũ festival, I have seen a scene so gaily illuminated and adorned, that the whole seemed enchantment; every native, as he approached the god, threw himself on the ground with the most profound reverence, and muttered his praise with rapture as he mingled in the delighted crowd. Could I have forgotten that these people were perpetrating a dreadful crime, and that these nightly festivals were connected with the greatest impurities, I should have been highly gratified.

twelve or one o'clock in the day. Many come to hear, who present various offerings to the god; after which a grand feast is given to the bramhũns. The expenses of this festival are defrayed either by rich natives, or from the revenues of the temples.

At the full moon in Phalgunũ, the Dolũ¹, another swinging festival, is held.—Fifteen days before the full moon the holidays begin, from which time the Hindoos assemble in the night to sing and dance; and in the day they wander about the streets, throwing red powder^m at the passengers, either with their hands or through a syringe. On the night before the full moon, the ceremonies of worship are performed; at the close of which, having besmeared themselves with red powder, they carry the god from his house to some distance, amidst the sounds of music, dancing, fireworks, singing, &c. A bamboo, with a straw man tied to it, having been erected in some plain, they place the god here, and again worship him. After three hours have been spent in various sports, especially with fireworks, they set fire to the bamboo and straw, carrying back the image to the temple. Very early in the morning they bathe the god, set him on a chair, and then worship him, rocking him in this chair, and throwing upon him red powder. At twelve o'clock at noon these ceremonies are repeated with greater splendour; when many

¹ All these festivals are intended to represent the obscene acts or play of Krishnũ. This is the play of swinging common to young folks in Europe. I am told that on this occasion, in various places in Hindoosthanũ, many families sit up all night, swinging by the light of the moon. They suspend a cord betwixt two trees, and while some are swinging, others are singing impure songs, and others dancing.

^m This powder is made with the roots of wild ginger, coloured with saffron wood. Other ingredients are added to make superior kinds.

offerings are presented, and the bramhũns entertained. About four the festival closes by another repetition of the same ceremonies. The god is then washed, anointed, clothed, and put into the temple; where food remains before him for some time, and is then given to the bramhũns.

Besides these many other festivals less popular are held in the course of the year.

Many small black stones, having images of Krishnũ cut in them, are to be found in the houses of the Hindoos; to which different names are given, but they are all forms of Krishnũ. The temples dedicated to Krishnũ are very numerous; and it is a scandalous fact that the image of Radha, his mistress, always accompanies that of Krishnũ, and not those of his wives Rookminēē and Sũtyũ-bhama. Many persons may be heard in the streets, and when sitting in their shops, repeating to themselves and to parrots the names of Radha and Krishnũ, as works of merit. Pantomimical entertainments are frequently represented, in which the lewd actions of this god are exhibited.

Six parts out of ten of the whole Hindoo population of Bengal are supposed to be the disciples of this god. The far greater part of these, however, are of the lower orders, and but few of them bramhũnsⁿ. The mark on their foreheads consists of two straight lines from the tip of the nose to the back of the head.

A story of Krishnũ.—The death of Shishoo-palũ is thus related:—A quarrel arose at a sacrifice between Krishnũ and this monarch, respecting the point of precedency, which

ⁿ The greater part of the bramhũns are disciples of the female deities, (Shaktus.)

Shishoo-palū would not resign to Krishnū: 'What!' says he, 'shall I be preceded by the son of a cowherd; one who has eaten with a cow-keeper, who has led cows to pasture, and has been guilty of all manner of abominations?' Krishnū restrained his rage for some time; but at length became exceedingly angry, and cut off his head at one blow. It was prophesied of Shishoo-palū, that as soon as he saw the person by whose hands he should die, two of his four arms would fall off; and this is said to have happened the moment he saw Krishnū at the meeting of the kings at this sacrifice.

Another story.—On a certain occasion the lascivious Krishnū heard, that king Dūndēē possessed a horse, which every night assumed the form of a beautiful female. Krishnū asked for this horse: but the king refused him, and fled to Bhēēmū, Krishnū's friend; who, rather than abandon a person who had claimed his protection, resolved to break the ties of friendship with Krishnū, and go to war with him. A war commenced, which continued to rage with the utmost fury, till the horse, assuming the shape of a kinnūrēē, ascended to heaven, the period of the curse under which it lay being expired.

Krishnū ruining his friend by urging him to declare a deliberate falsehood.—In the war betwixt the family of Dooryodhūnū and the Pandūvūs, Dronacharjyū was so mighty a warrior that the Pandūvūs had no hope of success, unless they could cut him off; to accomplish which, Krishnū contrived to throw Dronacharjyū off his guard, by causing it to be reported through the army, that his son Ushwūtt'hama was killed. The father refused to believe the report, unless Yoodhist'hirū would say it was true. Krishnū pressed Yoodhist'hirū to tell this lie, as it would

insure success to their affairs ; and, in cases of extremity, the shastrü had declared it lawful to employ falsehood. Yoodhist'hirü at first positively refused, but was at length persuaded by the entreaties of Krishnü, Ūrjoonü, and others ; who told him the assertion would not be a lie, as an elephant of Dooryodhünü's, of the same name, had actually been killed in battle. Dronacharjyü was so overcome when he was thus brought to believe the news, that Ūrjoonü soon dispatched him ; which completely changed the face of the battle. On account of this falsehood, Yoodhist'hirü, in going to heaven, was terrified by a sight of the torments of hell.—Where did Krishnü, the father of this lie, go ?

Theft and murder committed by Krishnü.—When Krishnü was going to Müt'hoora to destroy Kūngsü, as he approached the city he felt ashamed of the meanness of his dress, which consisted only of some shreds of cloth, like ropes, tied round his loins ; and said to his brother Bülü-ramü, ' All are going to this sacrifice elegantly dressed ; we cannot go in this condition.' Krishnü then sent his brother to a washerman, who however would not part with the clothes in his possession, as they belonged to king Kūngsü. A quarrel ensued, in the midst of which Krishnü killed the washerman, and carried off the clothes. These freebooters next went to a shop, and stole two necklaces ; and afterwards seized some sandal-wood, which a deformed woman was taking to the palace of Kūngsü : but, to reward her, Krishnü pulled her straight, and made her more beautiful than the ūpsūras. The woman asked Krishnü, since he had made her so beautiful, who should marry her. Krishnü asked her, to whom she wished to be united. She said, to himself ;—and from that time she became his mistress.

SECT. II.—*Gopalū*°.

THIS is an image of Krishnū in his childhood. He is resting on one knee, with his right hand extended, craving some sweetmeats from his mother.

This infant god is worshipped at the festivals in honour of Krishnū: the ceremonies are the same, though the formulas are different.

Those who preserve stone, or brass, or other images of this god in their houses, as many do, worship them every day, or whenever they choose. Many persons receive the initiating incantation of Gopalū as their guardian deity.

Girēeshū-chūndrū, the raja of Nūdēeya, in the year 1807, had two dreams, in which the god Gopalū appeared to him, and told him, that in a certain place in Nūdēeya, a beautiful image of him was buried deep in the ground. The raja paid no attention to his dreams, till the god appeared to him a third time, telling him the same thing: when he consulted his principal servants, who sent labourers to dig up the image; but none was found. A few nights after, Gopalū appeared again, and told the raja that he was to be found in such a place, describing the spot in a more particular manner. The raja again sent his servants, who found the image. The greatest rejoicings took place at Nūdēeya on this occasion; learned bramhūns were called; and a vast concourse of people collected from the surrounding country to behold this miraculously discovered god, and to

° The cowherd.

witness his installation, at which four thousand roopees were expended: a temple was afterwards erected on the spot, and the god placed in it. This image is now become very famous: the offerings presented to it do not amount, it is said, to less than two hundred roopees monthly.

Another image of the infant Krishnũ, called Balũgopalũ, made of stone or metal, is kept in the houses of many, and worshipped daily, as well as at the festivals in honour of Krishnũ.



SECT. III.—*Gopēē-nat'hũ*.*

THIS is another form of Krishnũ. In some places the image is worshipped every day, as well as at the festivals in honour of Krishnũ.

A celebrated image of this god is set up at Ūgrũ-dwēēpũ, where an annual festival is held, on the 11th and five following days of the decrease of the moon, in Choitrũ. The origin of this image is so recent, that the story is known to every Hindoo:—Two religious mendicants, since become famous among the followers of Krishnũ, Choitũnyũ and Nityanũndũ, sent their disciple Ghoshũ-t'hakoorũ, who did not relish an austere life, to Ūgrũ-dwēēpũ, and directed him to take a certain stone with him, and make an image of *Gopēē-nat'hũ*, which he should set up there and worship. Ghoshũ-t'hakoorũ obeyed his spiritual guides; took the stone on his head; set it up as a god, the gift of Choitũnyũ and Nityanũndũ, and began to

* The god of the milk-maids.

worship it in public daily. The god soon appeared to him in dreams, and revealed a number of secret things; so that by degrees Gopēē-nat'hũ of Ūgrũ-dwēēpũ became very famous. One night a stranger came to the temple at a very late hour, when no one was awake to give him refreshment. The god himself, however, in the form of Ghoshũ-t'hakoorũ, took an ornament from his ancle, and purchased some food for the stranger at an adjoining shop. In the morning there was a great noise in the town about this ornament, when the shopkeeper and the stranger declared these facts, so creditable to the benevolence of the god; and from this circumstance the fame of Gopēē-nat'hũ spread still wider. After the death of Ghoshũ-t'hakoorũ, the god appeared to his successor, and directed him to perform the funeral rites; in the celebration of which it was contrived that the god himself should present the offering to the manes: for when the kooshũ grass, the rice, and the water were put into the hands of the image, the god (a little more water than usual being poured into his hand) poured out the offering; when the crowd set up a great shout, declaring that the god himself had presented the offering to the manes. At present, it is said, this god brings in not less than 25,000 roopees annually to his owner.

At the above-mentioned festival, it is supposed that 100,000 people assemble each day at Ūgrũ-dwēēpũ; among whom are great multitudes of lewd women, who accompany the religious mendicants. Filthy songs about Krishnũ and his mistresses are sung by the crowd, and all manner of indecent diversions practised. Different casts eat together here.

After the death of Ghoshũ-t'hakoorũ, the image fell into the hands of the raja, or lord of the soil; who sent

bramhũns to perform the ceremonies before the image, and receive the offerings. Raja Nũvũ-krishnũ, of Calcutta, once seized this image for a debt of three lacks of roopees, due to him from the owner, raja Krishnũ-chũndrũ-rayũ. The latter afterwards regained the image by a suit at law; but not till Nũvũ-krishnũ had made another Gopē-nat'hũ exactly like it.

All this has arisen out of a stone given by two mendicants to one of their companions!—Who can avoid feeling a mingled sensation of disgust and pity, while he beholds such multitudes, the abject slaves of a superstition so degrading?



SECT. IV.—*Jũgũnnat'hũ*^q.

THE image of this god has no legs, and only stumps of arms^r: the head and eyes are very large. At the festivals the bramhũns adorn him with silver or golden hands.

Krishnũ, in some period of Hindoo history, was accidentally killed by ũngũdũ, a hunter; who left the body to rot under the tree where it fell. Some pious person, however, collected the bones of Krishnũ, and placed them in a box; where they remained till Indrũ-dhoomnũ, a king, who was performing religious austerities to obtain some favour

^q The lord of the world, from *jũgũt*, the world, and *nat'hũ*, lord.

^r The Athenians placed statues at their doors to drive away thieves, which they called *Hermæ*, from Mercury. These images had neither hands nor feet, and hence Mercury was called *Cyllenius*, and by contraction *Cyllius*, from *Kullos*, viz. without hands or feet.

of Vishnoo, was directed by the latter to form the image of Jügünnat'hü, and put into its belly these bones of Krishnü, by which means he should obtain the fruit of his religious austerities. Indrü-dhoomnü enquired who should make this image; and was commanded to pray to Vishwü-kurmü^s. He did so, and obtained his request; but Vishwü-kürmü at the same time declared, that if any one disturbed him while preparing the image, he would leave it in an unfinished state. He then began, and in one night built a temple upon the blue mountain in Orissa, and proceeded to prepare the image in the temple: but the impatient king, after waiting fifteen days, went to the spot; on which Vishwü-kürmü desisted from the work, and left the god without hands or feet. The king was very much disconcerted; but on praying to Brümha, he promised to make the image famous in its present shape.

Indrü-dhoomnü now invited all the gods to be present at the setting up of this image: Brümha himself acted as high priest, and gave eyes and a soul to the god, which completely established the fame of Jügünnat'hü. This image is said to lie in a pool near the present temple, at Jügünnat'hü-kshétrü in Orissa, commonly known among the English by the name of Jügünnat'hü's pagoda. The particulars of this place will be found in the account of the Hindoo holy places, the resort of pilgrims.

Jügünnat'hü has many temples in Bengal, built by rich men as works of merit, and endowed either with lands, villages, or money. The worship of this god is performed in these temples every morning and evening; at which times people come to see the god, or prostrate themselves

^s The architect of the gods.

before him. During the intervals of worship, and after the god has partaken of the offerings, he is laid down to sleep^t, when the temple is shut up till the next hour of worship.

Bramhũns may make offerings of boiled rice to this or to any other god, but shōōdrũs cannot: they are permitted to offer only dried rice^u. The food which is offered to Jũgũnnat'hũ is either eaten by the bramhũns and their families at the temples, or by passengers and others, who purchase it of those shopkeepers that have bought it of the bramhũns; a little is given to the poor.

There are two annual festivals in Bengal in honour of this god; the Snanũ-yatra, and the Rũt'hũ-yatra.

At the Snanũ-yatra, in the month Jyoisht'hũ, this lord of the world, wrapped in a cloth, is carried out and placed in a seat on a large terrace built in an open place near the temple. Here the bramhũns, surrounded by an immense concourse of spectators, bathe the god by pouring water on his head, during the reading of incantations. The people at the close of the ceremony make obeisance, some by lifting their hands to their foreheads, and others by prostration, and then depart, assured by the shastrũs that they shall be subject to no more births, but be admitted to heaven after the death of this body. The bramhũns then wipe this creator of the world, and carry him back to the

^t The images of the gods in all the Hindoo temples, at certain hours, are laid down to sleep; at least, all those that are small enough to be laid down and lifted up again.

^u The bramhũns do not eat the boiled rice of the shōōdrũs. Sweetmeats, fruit, the water of the Ganges, &c. are things received from shōōdrũs. Yet there are a few bramhũns who refuse even sweetmeats and water from the hands of shōōdrũs.

temple; after which the ceremonies of worship are performed before him with great shew. This *snanũ*, however, is not confined to *Jũgũnnat'hũ*; but at this time all the different images of Vishnoo, throughout the country, are bathed. It is the custom of the Hindoos to feed their children with rice for the first time when they are six, seven, or nine months old. On this day, before the ceremony of feeding the child, they bathe it, repeating incantations. *Krishnũ* partook of his first rice at the full moon in *Jyoist'hũ*; in commemoration of which, this *snanũ-yatra* is performed annually by the worshippers of any separate form of Vishnoo.

About seventeen days after the *snanũ-yatra*, on the second of the increase of the moon in *Asharhũ*, the *Rũ'thũ* or car festival is held. Before the god is taken out of the temple to be placed on the car, the usual ceremonies of worship are performed. The car belonging to the image near Serampore is in the form of a tapering tower, between thirty and forty cubits high. It has sixteen wheels, two horses, and one coachman, all of wood. *Jũgũnnat'hũ*, his brother *Bũlũ-ramũ*, and their sister *Soobhũdra*, are drawn up by ropes tied round the neck, and seated on benches in an elevated part of the carriage; when a servant on each side waves a tail of the cow of Tartary, called a *chamũrũ*^{*}. The crowd draw the carriage by means of a hawser; their shouts, as the carriage proceeds, may be heard at the distance of a mile. Being arrived at the appointed spot, the *bramhũns* take out the images, and carry them to the temple of some other god, or to a place prepared for them, where they remain eight days. At Serampore, *Jũgũn-*

* The *chamũrũ* is a necessary appendage to royalty among the Hindoos.

nat'hū, and his brother and sister, visit the god Radha-vūllūbhū^y; and here the wives of bramhūns, who are never seen at shews, and who seldom leave home, come to look at Jūgūnnat'hū. The car stands empty during this time, and the crowd flock to gaze at the indecent figures^z, alluding to the abominations of the gods, which are painted all over it. Temporary shops are erected near the place where the car stands, like booths on a race-ground^a. At the end of eight days, the god is again drawn up by the neck, placed in the car, and carried back to the place from whence he came; but the crowd is not quite so great as when the carriage is drawn out. Many recent instances might be collected of persons, diseased or in distress, casting themselves under the wheels of this ponderous car, and being crushed to death.

This festival is intended to celebrate the diversions of Krishnū and the milkmaids, with whom he used to ride out in his chariot.



SECT. V.—*Būlū-ramū*^b.

THIS god was cotemporary with Krishnū. His image, painted white, almost always goes with that of Jūgūn-

^y Another form of Krishnū. The name intimates that this god is the paramour of Radha.

^z Romans i. 27.

^a The spirit of gambling is very prevalent at this festival. I have been credibly informed, that, a year or two ago, at Serampore, a man actually sold his wife for a slave, in order to supply himself with money for gaming.

^b He who pursues pleasure, or bestows it, in his own strength.

nat'hũ, though in a few temples it is set up alone. At the worship of Jũgũnnat'hũ, and also at that of Krishnũ, a short service is performed in the name of Bũlũ-ramũ, whose image also sometimes accompanies that of Krishnũ. Some place the image of Rėvũtėē by the side of her husband. From the sũtyũ to the kũlee-yoogũ this female, the daughter of king Rėvũtũ, remained unmarried^c. The king, at length, asked Brũmha, to whom he should give his daughter in marriage: Brũmha recommended Bũlũ-ramũ, who saw her for the first time when ploughing. Notwithstanding her immense stature, (it is said her stature reached as high as a sound ascends in clapping the hands seven times,) Bũlũ-ramũ married her; and to bring down her monstrous height, he fastened a plough-share to her shoulders.



SECT. VI.—*Ramũ*^d.

THE following history of this god forms a brief table of contents of the *Ramayũnũ*^e, an epic poem, much celebrated among the Hindoos.

At a certain period, king Dũshũ-rũt'hũ, having been cherished with great affection by his wife Kėkoiyėē^f, promised her whatever she should ask. She told him that she would avail herself of his promises on some future occa-

^c This old maid must have been 3,888,000 years old at the time of her marriage, if we date her birth from the beginning of the sũtyũ-yoogũ.

^d The happy, or he who makes happy.

^e I have omitted the long table of contents of this work inserted in the first edition, thinking it unnecessary, as the *Ramayũnũ* with an English translation is issuing from the Serampore press. [The second edition is now published in England. *Ed.*]

^f Dũshũ-rũt'hũ had 250 wives.

sion; and when Ramũ was called to the coadjutorship by the voice of the people, and to which Dũshũ-rũt'hũ gladly assented, Kẽkoiyẽẽ reminded the king of his promise; and at the instigation of a deformed and revengeful female slave, whom Ramũ had formerly beaten, she petitioned that Ramũ might be exiled to a distant forest to live as an ascetic, and that Bhũrũtũ her son might be installed in his stead. The king reluctantly complied. Ramũ however readily submitted, and went into the forest, taking with him Sẽẽta and his brother Lũkshmũnũ. Dũshũ-rũt'hũ soon died of grief for Ramũ; after which a shoe of Ramũ's was placed on the throne, Bhũrũtũ refusing the crown. When in the forest, Sõõrpũ-nũkha^g, the sister of Ravũnũ, a giant who reigned at Lũnka, (Ceylon,) proposed marriage to Ramũ, who sent her to Lũkshmũnũ; he sent her again to Ramũ; Ramũ sending her back to Lũkshmũnũ, the latter cut off her nose: on this she fled to her brothers Khũrũ and Dõõshũnũ, who immediately made war upon Ramũ; Ramũ, however, destroyed them, as well as their army of 14,000 giants, (rakshũsũs.) Ravũnũ, on hearing of these events, requested Murẽẽchũ, another giant, to go to the residence of Ramũ in the form of a beautiful deer, and tempt Ramũ to pursue him, while he stole Sẽẽta. Marẽẽchũ consented, and Ramũ, at the urgent request of Sẽẽta, pursued the flying deer, leaving Lũkshmũnũ to guard his family. When Marẽẽchũ, in the form of the deer, was wounded, he set up a loud cry like the voice of Ramũ; which greatly alarmed Sẽẽta, who prevailed on Lũkshmũnũ to follow her beloved husband. While Sẽẽta was thus left alone, Ravũnũ carried her off in triumph. The poem then describes the grief of Ramũ and his brother for the

^g A name given to her on account of her having nails like a Hindoo fan for winnowing corn.

loss of Sēēta. Ravūnū, in taking away Seēta, was met by Jūtayoo, a vulture, formerly the friend of Dāshū-rūt'hū. This bird endeavoured to deliver Sēēta by fighting with Ravūnū; but being unsuccessful, Sēēta directed him to inform Ramū, that Ravūnū was carrying her away. Ramū in his search for Sēēta met with this bird, which, as soon as it had delivered this account, died of the wounds it had received in fighting with Ravūnū. Ramū and his brother now went forward in pursuit of Ravūnū, and met with the giant Kūbūndhū, whom they destroyed. This giant immediately assumed another body, and informed Ramū that he had formerly lived in the heaven of Indrū, but had been cursed, and sent down to take the body of a rakshūsū. He further informed Ramū, that two brothers, (monkies,) Soogrēēvū and Balēē, were in a state of warfare, Balēē having seduced his brother's wife; he therefore advised Ramū to destroy Balēē, and contract an alliance with Soogrēēvū, by whose means he should obtain Sēēta. Ramū took this advice, and having destroyed Balēē^h, restored Soogrēēvū to his kingdom. To prove his gratitude to Ramū, Soogrēēvū collected his army of monkies, and sent them to seek for Sēēta. The monkies who went southward met Sūmpatee, a vulture without wings, brother to Jūtayoo, who informed them that he had seen Sēēta at Lūnka, (Ceylon.) Hūnooman, one of Soogrēēvū's generals, immediately leaped across the sea, (five hundred milesⁱ), to Lūnka, where he found Sēēta in a garden belonging to Ravūnū; to whom he gave a ring from Ramū, while she, in return, sent Ramū a jewel from her hair. Hūnooman

^h Ramū, compared with Krishnū, is a pure character; yet we see him here, without provocation, destroy the rightful heir to a throne, and set up one who had seduced the wife of his brother.

ⁱ No one can doubt the propriety of making a spy of a monkey who can leap 500 miles at once.

then began to destroy one of Ravūnū's gardens; who sent people to kill Hūnooman, but he destroyed those who were sent. Ravūnū then sent his son Ūkshūyū against the mischievous monkey; but he also was destroyed. Ravūnū next sent his eldest son Indrūjit, who seized Hūnooman, and bringing him before his father, the king ordered his attendants to set fire to his tail; when the enraged monkey, with his burning tail, leaped from house to house, and set all Lūnka on fire: after finishing which he came to Sēēta, and complained that he could not extinguish the fire that had kindled on his tail; she directed him to spit upon it, and he, raising it to his face for this purpose, set his face on fire. He then complained, that when he arrived at home with such a black face, all the monkeys would laugh at him. Sēēta, to comfort him, assured him, that all the other monkeys should have black faces also; and when Hūnooman came amongst his friends, he found that, according to the promise of Sēēta, they had all black faces as well as himself. After hearing the account brought by Hūnooman, Ramū and Lūkshmūnū, with Soogrēēvū and his army of monkeys, proceeded to invade Lūnka. They tore up the mountains, trees, and other large substances, and cast them into the sea to form a bridge^k;

^k Ramū's bridge. See the map of Hindoost'han. Ramū was at a loss how to lead his army across the sea to Lūnka. He fasted, and prayed to Sagūrū for three days, and was angry with the god for not appearing to him. He therefore ordered Lūkshmūnū to fire an arrow, and carry away the god's umbrella. He did so, and the arrow, carrying away the umbrella, penetrated even as far as patalū. The god, aroused from his sleep, exclaimed, 'Is Ramū arrived by the sea side, and I have not known it?' He then directed Ramū to apply to king Nūlū, to whom he had given a blessing, that whatever he threw into the sea should become buoyant. At the command of Nūlū, the monkeys tore up the neighbouring mountains, and cast them into the sea. Hūnooman brought three mountains on his head at once, each 64 miles in circumference; and one

which, however, Ravūnū was constantly employed in breaking down. Vibhēeshūnū, Ravūnū's brother, perceiving that Ramū would make good his landing, recommended that Sēēta should be given up: but his brother, unable to bear this advice, quarrelled with Vibhēeshūnū; who came over to Ramū, and advised him to throw into the sea a temple and image of Shivū, assuring him, that as Ravūnū was a worshipper of Shivū, he would not destroy the temple and image of his god. Ramū followed this advice, soon made good his landing, and began the war with Ravūnū. After many giants had been killed, Koombhūkūrnū, a monstrous giant, 2,400 cubits high, and 1,600 thick, brother to Ravūnū, engaged Ramū and the monkeys. He began the combat by seizing and devouring his enemies. Some of them, as soon as they entered his mouth, came out at his nostrils and ears, and escaped. The terrified monkeys fled; but Ramū with his arrows first cut off his arms, then his legs. Still he waddled round, and endeavoured to devour all within his reach, till Ramū gave him a mortal wound in the neck. Next after Koombhūkūrnū, Indrūjit engaged in the contest. He seized Ramū, and, by the power of enchantment, carried him down to patalū; where Hūnooman went in search of him, and, while Mūhēeravūnū was there, instructing Indrūjit how to prostrate himself before an image of the goddess Bhūdrū-kalē, Hūnooman cut off his head, and rescued Ramū. At length Ravūnū himself entered the combat; but after many conflicts, finding himself very weak, he resolved to restore Sēēta, and put an end to the war. To this Ramū consented; but while Ravūnū was on the point of bringing Sēēta, he thought within himself, 'If I do this, every one will charge

on each shoulder, equally large; together with one under each arm, one in each paw, and one on his tail. All these mountains being thrown into the sea, and becoming buoyant, a complete bridge was formed.

me with cowardice : shall I, a giant, refuse to fight ?' The combat was again renewed, and Ravūnū was slain¹. Ramū then obtained his wife ; but as a trial of her innocence while in the hands of Ravūnū, he compelled her to pass through a fiery ordeal : which she did unhurt. He then returned to Ūyodhya, and mounted the throne. After this, however, some person objected to Ramū, that it was not proper for him to receive Sēēta, after she had been in keeping of a giant. He therefore sent her into the forest to

¹ The engagement betwixt Ramū and Ravūnū lasted seven days : Ramū cut off the ten heads of Ravūnū a hundred times, but they were always miraculously restored. Ramū then discharged an arrow which had these properties, that if it went into the air, it became a thousand ; if it entered the body of an enemy, it became an innumerable multitude. Ravūnū at the sight of this arrow was filled with fear, and would have fled ; but recollecting that Shivū had once given him an arrow that was to rescue him in a time of extreme peril, he discharged it, and destroyed Ramū's terrible arrow. Still however he was full of fear, for whichever way he turned, he saw Ramū ; he shut his eyes, but still he saw him in his mind. At length, perceiving no way of escape, he began to flatter Ramū ; who was so softened, that he declared he would never destroy Ravūnū. The gods, alarmed lest Ravūnū should be spared, excited him to reproach Ramū ; who, indignant at such conduct, let fly an arrow which pierced Ravūnū's body, proceeded through the earth into the regions below, and having there bathed, returned in the form of a goose, and again entered the quiver in its original shape. The gods were so much in fear of Ravūnū, that they durst not begin to rejoice till they were sure he was dead : in whispers they asked each other, ' Is he dead ? '—' Is he really dead ? ' &c. When it was known that he was certainly dead, the gods, Ramū, the monkeys, and the bears, all began to dance.—Mündodūrēē, the chief wife of Ravūnū, and mother of Indrūjit, after the death of her husband, went to Ramū, weeping. Ramū, not knowing who she was, gave her this blessing, that she should never become a widow. Finding his mistake, (having just killed her husband,) he ordered Hūnooman continually to throw wood into the fire ; according to a proverb among the Hindoos, that as long as the body of the husband is burning, a woman is not called a widow. To this day, therefore, Hūnooman keeps laying logs on the fire ; and every time a Hindoo puts his fingers in his ears and hears a sound, he says, he hears the bones of Ravūnū burning.

Valmēēkee, the writer of the Ramayūnū, where she was delivered of two sons, Lūvū and Kooshū; the latter of whom was afterwards stolen by the god Pūnchanūnū, when Valmēēkee, to comfort the mother, took a blade of kooshū grass, and secretly made a child so much like Kooshū, that Sēēta did not know it from her own son. In a short time, however, Pūnchanūnū, not being able to destroy a child of Ramū's, restored Kooshū, and Valmēēkee caused the two boys to become one. Before his death Ramū performed the sacrifice of a horse^m; and Sēēta and her two sons, Lūvū and Kooshū, were restored to him: but Ramū wishing Sēēta again to pass through a fiery ordeal, she entered the fire; but the goddess Prūt'hiveeⁿ, (Sēēta's mother,) opened her mouth, and received her into patalū. At length Kalū-poorooshū, the angel of death, went to Ramū, expressing a wish for a secret conference. Ramū promised that while he was present no one should be admitted, and placed Lūkshmūnū at the door to keep out all intruders: but while Ramū and Kalū-poorooshū were closeted, Doorvasa, the sage, arrived, and demanded an interview with Ramū. This sage was so very passionate, that every one dreaded contradicting him; Lūkshmūnū, therefore, through fear, went in and announced his arrival. Ramū, for this offence, rejected his brother, who in a paroxysm of grief drowned himself in the sacred river Sūrūyoo, and went to heaven. Ramū afterwards put an end to his life in the same manner. Lūvū and Kooshū succeeded him^o.

^m This sacrifice was performed by many of the ancient Hindoo princes, and was considered as highly meritorious.

ⁿ The earth personified.

^o There are a few sentences in this history, which are not to be found in Valmēēkee's Ramayūnū; but they may be seen in the Bengalee translation.

The image of Ramũ is painted green; he is represented as sitting on a throne, or on Hũnooman, the monkey, with a crown upon his head. He holds in one hand a bow, in another an arrow, and has a bundle of arrows slung at his back.

The worship paid to him is of the same kind as that to Krishnũ; but the formulas are different. On the ninth of the increase of the moon in Choitrũ, on which day Ramũ was born, an annual festival is held, when multitudes of clay images are worshipped. The dolũ festival also is observed in honour of this god on this day, which is also kept as a fast; when Ramũ's three brothers, Bhũrũtũ, Lũkshmũnũ, and Shũtrũghnũ are worshipped, but the images of the first and last are never made. At other festivals also a few ceremonies in honour of Ramũ are performed.

The birth of Ramũ forms the seventh of the Hindoo incarnations. On the birth-day of this god^p the Hindoo merchants in general begin their new year's accounts. At the time of death, many Hindoos write the name of Ramũ on the breast and forehead of the dying person, with earth taken from the banks of the Ganges; and hence these persons after death, instead of being dragged to Yũmũ to be judged, immediately ascend to heaven. Many of the disciples of Ramũ become Ramahoots, a class of mendicants who impress on different parts of their bodies Ramũ's name, and the figure of his foot. The mark on the forehead of Ramũ's followers very much resembles a trident.

^p The gods on this day are said to have caused a shower of flowers to fall, as at the birth of Minerva it is said to have rained gold.

Temples containing the images of Ramū, Lūkshmūnū, Sēēta, and Hūnooman are erected in many parts of Bengal; and the worship of Ramū performed in them daily.



SECT. VII.—*Choitūnyū*^a.

THIS is the image of an almost naked mendicant, painted yellow. Some of the Hindoos believe, that amongst all the Hindoo incarnations there are four principal ones. The first, in the sūtyū-yoogū, called the Shooklū-vūrnū^r incarnation, was that of Ūnūntū; that in the tréta, the rūktū-vūrnū^s, was the incarnation of Kopilū-dévū; that in the dwapūrū-yoogū, the Krishnū-vūrnū^t; and the last, in the kūlee-yoogū, called pēētū-vūrnū^u, that of Choitūnyū.

According to the disciples of Choitūnyū, the founder of this sect, Ūdwoitū, a voidikū bramhūn, lived at Shanti-poorū about 400 years ago. Nityanūndū, another leader, was born at Nūdēēya, a little before Choitūnyū. His father was a rarhēēyū bramhūn. Choitūnyū's father, Jū-gunnat'hū-Mishrū, a voidikū bramhūn, lived at Nūdēēya; his wife's name was Shūchēē; their first son, Vishwūmb-hūrū, embraced the profession of a dūndēē. The mother was advanced in years when Choitūnyū was born; the child continued three days without taking the breast, and the parents, not thinking it would live, putting it into a basket, hung it on a tree near the house^x. At this time

^a The wise. ^r The white. ^s The blood-coloured. ^t The black.

^u The yellow.

^x There are still many instances of children being exposed. If a child appear unlikely to live, the parents consult an astrologer, who perhaps gives but small hopes of the child's recovery. Voiragees and other men-

Ūdwoitū before-mentioned, who had heard of this birth, having some suspicions that it might be the incarnation he had expected and foretold, visited the parents, and learning from the mother that she had not received the initiating incantation of Huree, he wrote, with his great toe, this incantation on the soft earth :—‘ Huree, Krishnū ; Hūree, Krishnū ; Krishnū, Krishnū, Hūree, Hūree ; Hūree, Ramū, Hūree, Ramū, Ramū, Ramū, Huree, Huree.’ After the mother had received this incantation, the child was taken down, and immediately began to draw the breast.

Choitūnyū made a great progress in learning ; at sixteen he married Vishnoo-priya, and continued in a secular state till forty-four, when he was persuaded by Ūdwoitū and other dūndēēs then at his house, to renounce his poita, and become a mendicant : upon which, forsaking his mother and wife, he went to Benares. His family was reduced to great distress indeed ; and it was thought a crime that a person upon whom such a family depended should embrace a life of mendicity.

From this period Choitūnyū began to form a new sect, giving to all his followers the preceding initiatory incantation, and continuing to call them voishnūvūs. He exhorted them to renounce a secular life ; to visit the different

dicants, who make a merit of possessing no worldly attachments, sometimes hang up a child in a pot in a tree ; or, putting it in a pot, let it float down the river. Persons of other casts may do it, but these the most frequently. Mr. Carey’s journal, dated in July, 1794, contains the following paragraph : ‘ One day, as Mr. Thomas and I were riding out, we saw a basket hung in a tree, in which an infant had been exposed ; the skull remained, but the rest had been devoured by ants.’ See Baptist Mission Accounts, vol. i. p. 183. This practice is now prohibited by the Hon. Company’s Government, in a regulation made for that purpose.

holy places on pilgrimage; to eat with all casts who should receive the preceding incantation; to repeat the name of Vishnoo, using the bead-roll made with the stalk of basil. He further taught that widows might marry; but forbade the eating of fish or flesh, and the worship of the deities to whom bloody sacrifices are offered, as well as all communion with those who make these sacrifices.

He went to Jügünnat'hü-kshétru in Orissa, and there assuming six arms, received many honours. He exhorted Ūdwoitü and Nityanündü to labour in making proselytes; but directed Nityanündü to enter into a secular state^y: he did so, and took up his residence at Khürdu, near Calcutta. Choitünyü wrote to his two principal disciples from Orissa, again exhorting them to labour in gaining proselytes; yet few or none joined them: and from this time Choitünyü himself was never more heard of. Ūdwoitü and Nityanündü raised families, whose descendants live at Shantipoorü, Vagna-para, and Khürdü to this day, where they are become leaders of the sect; all other Gosaees^z acknowledging the descendants of these two families as their superiors, and prostrating themselves before them. These Gosaees at present are men of large fortunes; at whose houses are the images originally set up by the male descendant of Choitünyü, by Nityanündü, and Ūdwoitü. Crowds are almost constantly arriving at these places with offerings: besides which, the Gosaees derive a large revenue from marriages, to superintend which they have agents distributed throughout the country, who are allowed a sixth part of the fee; a sum that from both parties amounts to about six shillings. They also dissolve marriages at the

^y Perceiving his aversion to a life of mendicacy.

^z Distant branches of the same families.

pleasure of the parties, on receiving the same fees. When a new disciple is initiated, a fee is also given; but the Gosaees obtain the largest sums at the deaths of such of their disciples as die intestate. At Calcutta, nearly all the women of ill-fame profess the religion of Choitūnyū before their death, that they may be entitled to some sort of funeral rites: as almost all these persons die intestate, and have no relations who will own them, the Gosaees obtain their effects.

The anniversaries of the deaths of the original founders of the sect are observed as festivals.

One fifth of the whole Hindoo population of Bengal are supposed to be followers of Choitūnyū, and of the Gosaees, his successors.

Many of these persons despise the other sects of Hindoos, and are great enemies of the bramhūns. They refuse to eat without their necklace, as the bramhūns do without their poita. Most of the mendicant followers of Vishnoo have embraced the tenets of Choitūnyū; but many of the disciples of the latter live in a secular state, and some of them are possessed of large property. Persons of this description frequently entertain a great number of voiragees at their houses; when, as an act of great merit, they prostrate themselves before these wanderers, wash, and lick the dust of their feet, and devour their orts. They pay no attention to the feasts and fasts of the Hindoo calendar, except those in honour of Krishnū.

The images most regarded among this sect are those of Choitūnyū and Nityanūndū, set up at Ūmbika, in the district of Burdwan.

About a hundred years ago, another man rose up in Bengal as the leader of a sect, whose dress, of many colours, is said to be so heavy that two or three people can scarcely carry it. This and his string of beads are preserved as relics at Ghoshparū, where he continued five years, and died at the house of Ramū-Shūrūnū-Palū, a shōōdrū of the Sūd-gopū cast, to whom he communicated his supernatural powers; and who, after the death of this mendicant, began to teach the doctrine of a constant incarnation, and that God then dwelt in him. He persuaded many that he could cure the leprosy, and other diseases; and preached the doctrines of Choitūnyū, imitating him in conforming, for convenience sake, to many of the superstitions of the Hindoos. He also gave a new initiating incantation to his followers^a, who, of whatever cast, ate together privately. Vast multitudes joined this man, both Mūsūlmans and Hindoos; and carried him presents, eating together once or twice a year. By this means, from a state of deep poverty he became rich, and his son now lives in affluence.

A number of Ramū-Shūrūnū's disciples adhere to his son Doolalū; others follow Shivū-Ramū and some others of the old man's disciples, who pretend to have received the power of their master to cure diseases, &c. Though part of the father's followers have thus apostatized, Doolalū pretends that he has now 20,000 disciples.

^a The following is a translation of this incantation: 'O sinless Lord, O great Lord; at thy pleasure I go and return: not a moment am I without thee. I am ever with thee; save, O great Lord.'

SECT. VIII.—*Vishwü-kürma*^b

Is the son of Brümha, and architect of the gods : he is painted white, has three eyes, holds a club in his right hand ; wears a crown, a necklace of gold, and rings on his wrists. He presides over the arts, manufactures, &c.

The worship of this god is performed once, twice, or four times a year, in the month Ūgrūhayūnū, Poushū, Choitrū, or Bhadrū, by all artificers, to obtain success in business. The ceremonies may be performed either in the day or night, before any implements of trade. The joiners set up their mallet, chisel, saw, hatchet, &c. as the representative of this god. Weavers choose their shuttle, &c. putting them into the hole in the earth wherein they place their feet when they sit at work. The razor is the barber's god on this occasion. The potter, after a month's fast, adopts and worships the wheel with which he turns his pots. Masons choose their trowel ; washermen take the beetle or stamper, their smoothing irons, &c. as their god ; blacksmiths worship their hammer and bellows ; the farmer his plough ; spinsters their wheel. The shoemaker chooses his awl and knife, and bows down to them : and thus, amongst all the artificers, each one chooses the principal tool or instrument with which he works, and makes it a god, or the representative of Vishwü-kürma^c. The cere-

^b Vishwü, the world ; kürmü, work.

^c This worship affords another strong proof of the low and sordid nature of idolatry, and strikingly illustrates the words of our Lord, ' after all these things do the Gentiles seek.' Instead of raising their minds to the Great Source of all good, these persons are taught to worship the tools belonging to their trades, as the cause of their temporal happiness. This conduct seems to be reprov'd in the first chapter of the book of Habak-

monies are not long; but according to their ability the worshippers provide as good a feast as possible. At the close of the festival, the crowd form themselves into parties of pleasure: some go upon the river in boats, singing songs, and playing on different instruments of music; others sit in companies, smoke, and relate the news of the village; others spend their time in gaming, and some resort to houses of ill-fame.

Though the illiterate consider this god, who may be called the Indian Vulcan, as the inventor of all the mechanic arts, the shilpū shastrū, a part of the original védū, are more properly considered as their source. These works are not now read in Bengal, if they really exist: they describe, it is said, the proper shape and dimensions of all the various images of the Hindoo gods.

SECT. IX.—*Kamū-dévū, the Indian Cupid*^d.

THE image of this god, the son of Brūmha, is that of a beautiful youth, holding in his hands a bow and arrow of flowers. He is always supposed to be accompanied by his wife Rūtee*, by spring personified, the cuckoo, the humming-bee, and gentle breezes; and is represented as wandering through the three worlds.

kuk, 'They sacrifice unto their net, and burn incense unto their drag; because by them their portion is fat, and their meat plenteous.'

^d Kamū, desire; dévū, god.

* From Rūmū, to play, or to give pleasure. It is said that the god of love found Rūtee in the house of Shūmbūrū, a giant, whom he destroyed.

The image of Kamū-dévū is never made in Bengal, but on the 13th of the increase of the moon in Choitrū an annual festival is held, when the ceremonies of worship are performed before the shalgramū. At the time of marriage, and when a wife leaves her father's house to go to her husband for the first time, petitions are addressed to this god for children, and for happiness in the marriage state.

The pooranū and kavyū shastrūs abound with stories respecting Kamū-dévū, one of which I here give from the Kalikū pooranū:—The god of love, the most beautiful creature in the three worlds, with whom every one was pleased, immediately after his creation solicited the commands of Brūmha; who assured him, that, with his five arrows, he should wound with love the hearts of the inhabitants of the three worlds; that all beings should be subject to his sway, not excepting even Brūmha, Vishnū, and Shivū; and that through him the universe should be peopled. Kūndūrpū first discharged his arrow at Brūmha himself, who became enamoured of his own daughter, Sūndhya. Mūrēēchee, and the other sons of Brūmha, also smitten by his arrows, were inflamed with unlawful desires toward their sister. Shivū said to Brūmha, 'What! art thou inflamed with lust towards thy own daughter?' Brūmha was covered with shame, and, from the perspiration which issued from his body, Ūgnishwūta and other progenitors of mankind^f, to the number of 149,000, were born. Brūmha, full of rage against Kūndūrpū, cursed him, and declared that he should be burnt to ashes by the fire from the eye of Shivū; but on his intercessions pro-

^f In performing the ceremony called tūrpūnū, seven names are used in pouring out drink-offerings to all these ancestors.

mised, that when Shivũ should be married to Doorga, he would restore to him his body.

Names. Mũdũnũ, or he who intoxicates with love;—Mũn-mũt'hũ, he who agitates the mind;—Marũ, he who wounds with love;—Prũdyoomnũ, he who overcomes all;—Mēēnũ-kētũnu, he whose flag is a fish;—Kũndũrpũ, he who bloats the mind with desire;—Ūnũngũ, he who is destitute of body;—Ramũ, the creator of desire;—Pũnchũshũrũ, he who has five arrows;—Smũrũ, he who inflames;—Shũmbũraree, the enemy of the giant Shũmbũru;—Mũnũsijũ, he who is born in the heart;—Koosooméshoo, he whose arrows are flowers;—Ūnũnyũjũ, he who is born only in the mind;—Pooshpũ-dhũnwa, he whose bow is made of flowers;—Rũtee-pũtee, the husband of Rũtee;—Mũkũrũ-dhwũjũ, he whose flag is the animal Mũkũrũ;—Atmũbhoo, he who is self-created.



SECT. X.—*Sũtyũ-Narayũnũ.*

THIS is a form of Vishnoo, but the image is never made: a pan of water is the substitute.

This god is worshipped several times in the year, in the houses of the richer Hindoos, when all the bramhũns in the village are invited. The object of worship, painted red, and covered with leaves of the mango tree, is placed near a square board, at the four corners of which four arrows are set up, and from which garlands of flowers are suspended; a piece of clean linen is laid on the board, and then the offerings of flowers and sweetmeats. At the close of the festival, some one present reads different marvellous

stories in praise of this god. The sweetmeats are given to the guests, especially to the bramhuns: the acquisition of riches, recovery from sickness, the birth of children, the obtaining of any of the blessings, or the removing any of the miseries of life, are objects sought in the worship of this god.



THE preceding account of the terrestrial gods contains the names of all the principal deities of this description worshipped in Bengal. I am aware, however, that worship is paid to some idols not mentioned here; but these are only different forms of the deities whose history is given, and the worship is merely an appendage to the ceremonies at the great festivals.

CHAP. VI.

TERRESTRIAL GODDESSES.

SECT. I.—*Sēeta*.

THIS is the image of a yellow woman, covered with jewels: it always accompanies and is worshipped with that of her husband.

Sēeta was the daughter of king Jūnūkū^a, whose capital was Mit'hila. Her history, after her marriage with Ramū, will be found in the account of that god^b.

SECT. II.—*Radha*.

RADHA was the wife of Ayūnu-ghoshū, a cowherd of Gokoolū, where Krishnū in his youth resided: through

^a Shivū gave to Jūnūkū a bow so heavy that a thousand men could not lift it, and which the father placed in a separate room, and commanded Sēeta to sweep the room daily; in doing which she used to lift up the bow with her left hand, and sweep under it with her right. One day the king saw her thus move the bow, and, filled with astonishment, was at a loss to whom he should give this daughter in marriage. After some time, he came to this resolution, that whoever should be able to break this bow, should obtain Sēeta.—*Udhyatmu-Ramayunu*.

^b While Sēeta was detained at Lūnka, she was fed with ambrosia for twelve months by Indrū, as she would not eat in the house of a giant. That Ravūnū could not destroy her virtue, is thus accounted for by the

Vūraee, a procuress, he seduced Radha, and led her into the forest near the river Yūmoona, where they continued till Krishnū left her to begin the war with Kūngsū.

This mistress of Krishnū has been deified with her paramour. Her image is set up in temples with different forms of Krishnū, and worshipped at the festivals of this god. The act of looking upon these images together, is declared by the shastrūs to be an act of peculiar merit!

If a Hindoo be charged with any particular act of which he wishes to express his abhorrence, he exclaims, 'Radha-Krishnū!' Many persons repeat 'Ramū! Ramū! Ramū!' on such occasions, but no one says Sēēta-Ramū; yet when Krishnū's name is to be repeated, they always join to it that of his mistress Radha.

One of the Hindoo learned men has written a work (the Radha-tūntrū) to prove that Radha was an incarnation of Bhūgūvūtēē; and this opinion is quoted by the Hindoos of the present day to cover this abominable transaction.

SECT. III.—*Rookminēē and Sūtyū-bhama.*

THESE are the most distinguished wives of Krishnū, but their images are never made, Krishnū being always associ-

pooranūs:—This giant had before seized the wives of the gods, and dishonoured them; and one day he dishonoured his niece, the wife of king Nūlū: for which crime Kooyérū cursed him, and caused fire to proceed from his ten heads at once. By the entreaty of Brūmha, this curse was mitigated; with the proviso, however, that if he ever defiled the wife of another, it should be renewed in full force.—*Ibid.*

ated with Radha his mistress, and not with his lawful wives. At the festivals of Krishnū, however, these women are worshipped, as well as six other wives of this god, viz. Jambū-būtēē, Mitrūvinda, Lūgūnūjitēē, Lūkshmunā, Kalindēē, and Bhūdra; but Rookminēē and Sūtyū-bhama are the most distinguished.



SECT. IV.—*Soobhūdra.*

THIS sister of Jūgūnnat'hū is worshipped at the same time with her brother, and placed with him in the temples dedicated to his honour.

CHAP. VII.

DEITIES WORSHIPPED BY THE LOWER ORDERS
ONLY.SECT. I.—*Pūnchanūnū*^a

Is a form of Shivū: the image has five faces, and in each face three eyes. Some persons make a clay image, and worship it with the usual forms, adding bloody sacrifices; while others worship *Pūnchanūnū* before a stone placed underneath the *vūtū*^b, *ūshwūt'ht'hū*^c, or *koolū*^d trees. This stone is painted red at the top, and anointed with oil^e. Offerings of flowers, fruits, water, sweetmeats, and fried peas accompany the worship, and sometimes bloody sacrifices. In almost every village this worship is performed beneath some one of these trees. In some villages several of these shapeless stones^f are to be seen thus anointed, and consecrated to the worship of this god. In other places the clay images of *Pūnchanūnū* are placed in houses, or under trees; and old women, called *dyasinēēs*^g, devote them-

^a The five-faced.^b *Ficus Indica*.^c *Ficus religiosa*.^d *Zizyphus jujuba*.^e The statue of the god *Terminus* was either a square stone, or a log of wood; which the Romans usually perfumed with ointments, and crowned with garlands.^f The representative of the goddess *Passinuntia* was a shapeless stone. The Arabians are said to have worshipped a stone without the form or shape of a deity.^g It is probable that these *dyasinēēs* resemble the priestesses of *Cybele*.

selves to his service: they sweep the inside of the clay temple, and repeat the ceremonies of worship for others; constantly remaining near the image, and receiving all offerings and presents. Not more than one woman waits upon one idol, unless she admit a pupil, who expects to succeed her. These women, either married or widows, are treated almost as witches.

There is no appointed time for the worship of this god, but Tuesdays or Saturdays are preferred to other days.

There are some places in Bengal, where images of Pūnchanūnū are in great celebrity for bestowing the blessing of children, and other favours on the worshippers.

The Hindoo women are terrified at this god, and are exceedingly afraid lest their children should, in play, injure the stone under the tree^s. Some therefore warn their chil-

^s The late Jūgūnnat'hū-Tūrkkū-Pūnchanūnū, who died in the year 1807, at the advanced age of 112, and who was supposed to be the most learned Hindoo in Bengal, used to relate the following anecdote of himself:—Till he was twenty years old he was exceedingly ungovernable, and refused to apply to his studies. One day his parents rebuked him very sharply for his conduct, and he wandered to a neighbouring village, where he hid himself in the vūtū tree, under which was a very celebrated image of Pūnchanūnū. While in this tree, he discharged his urine on the god, and afterwards descended and threw him into a neighbouring pond. The next morning, when the person arrived whose livelihood depended on this image, he discovered his god was gone!! He returned into the village distracted, and the village was very soon all in an uproar about the lost god. In the midst of this confusion, the parents of Jūgūnnat'hū-Tūrkkū-Pūnchanūnū arrived to search for their son; when a man in the crowd declared that he had seen a young man sitting in Pūnchanūnū's tree, but what was become of the god he could not say. The runaway at length appeared, and the suspicions of all the villagers fell upon him, as the stealer of Pūnchanūnū. After some time he confessed the fact, pointed out the place where he had thrown the stone, and added

dren against going near these stones, by declaring that Pūchanūnū will assuredly kill them, if they touch or play with his image.

Children in fits of epilepsy are supposed to be seized by this god, and thrown into a state of frenzy, till they foam at the mouth, tear their hair, &c. The mother asks the supposed evil spirit his name, who answers, through the child, 'I am Pūchanūnū: your child has cast dust on my image, kicked it, and is the ringleader of all the children of the village in this wickedness. I will certainly take away his life.' The dyasinēē is now called, who comforts the weeping and alarmed family, and addresses the god thus: 'O Pūchanūnū! I pray thee restore this child: these are thy worshippers: the offender is but a child; and it is not proper for thee to be angry with such paltry offenders. If thou restore the child, the parents will sacrifice a goat to thee, and present to thee many offerings.' If this should fail to render the god propitious, they take the child to the image, before which they sit down, and offer the most excessive flattery to the god, causing the child to beat its head on the ground. After using every contrivance, they retire, and, at the close of the fit, believing that Pūchanūnū has cured the child, they present to him offerings according to their ability.

moreover that he had discharged his urine on the god. All hands were lifted up in amazement at this atrocious crime, and every one present pronounced his death as certain; for Pūchanūnū would certainly revenge such a daring insult. Our young hero was himself terribly affrighted, and from that hour sat down so sedulously to his studies, that he became the most learned man in Bengal. He was employed by the government in India for many years, at a salary of 300 roopees per month, and used to give advice on the subject of the Hindoo law in all difficult cases.

SECT. II.—*Dhūrmū T'hakoorū.*

ANOTHER form of Shivū. A black stone of any shape becomes the representative of this god. The worshippers paint the part designated as the forehead, and place it under a tree; others place the stone in the house, and give it silver eyes, and anoint it with oil, and worship it. Almost every village has one of these idols.

A festival in honour of this god is observed by some of the lower orders in Voishakū, in the day. The ceremonies are like those at the swinging festival, with the addition of bloody sacrifices, the greater number of which are goats. At this time devotees swing on hooks; perforate their sides with cords; pierce their tongues with spits; walk upon fire, and take it up in their hands; walk upon thorns; and throw themselves upon spikes, keeping a severe fast. The people who assemble to see these feats of self-torture, are entertained with singing, music, and dancing. On the 14th day, a great feast is held, when people bring their offerings, and giving them to the officiating bramhūn, request him to present them to the idol, to fulfil a vow; or with petitions to the god for some particular favour, as the birth of a child, recovery from sickness, or any other blessing.

Wherever this idol is placed in a house, a woman called a dyasinēē attends upon it, and repeats the daily ceremonies.

At two villages in Bengal, Poosoorēē and Rayū-kalee, the worship of this god is constantly attended by crowds from a great distance. If a woman's eldest child die, she

makes a vow before witnesses, that she will not cut her hair for two years; and that then, going to one of these villages, she will cut it off, and present an offering to the god, provided he will preserve her second child. Some women, as an acknowledgment of a favour, or to beg a blessing, take a young child in their arms; and putting on wet clothes, place an earthen pot full of burning coals upon some cloth on their heads; and sitting before the god in a supplicating posture, continue for some time offering incense, throwing Indian pitch into the pan of coals.

A poor man sometimes places the black stone, adorned with garlands, &c. in a basket, and the offerings which he collects at the doors of housekeepers in another, and, tying the baskets to a bamboo which he lays on his shoulder, carries the god from door to door as a shew; while another plays on a rude instrument of music, and joins in singing the praises of Dhūrmū-t'hakoōrū. Householders give a handful of rice, and the beggars present in return a flower which has been offered to the god.



SECT. III.—*Kaloo-rayū*.

THIS is another form of Shivū: the image is that of a yellow man sitting on a tyger, holding in his right hand an arrow, and in his left a bow.

A few of the lower orders set up clay images of this god in straw houses, and worship them at pleasure. The woodcutters in the Eastern, Western, and Southern forests of Bengal, in order to obtain protection from wild beasts, adopt a peculiar mode of worshipping this idol. The

head-boatman raises elevations of earth three or four inches high, and about three feet square; upon which he places balls of clay, painted red; and, among other ceremonies, offers rice, flowers, fruits, and the water of the Ganges carried from the river Hooglee, keeping a fast: the god then directs him in a dream where to cut wood free from danger. There is no authority for this worship in the shastrũs.

Dũkshina-rayũ is another god worshipped in the same manner, and by the same class of persons.



SECT. IV.—*Kalũ-Bhoirũvũ.*

A NAKED Shivũ, smeared with ashes; having three eyes; riding on a dog; and holding in one hand a horn, and in the other a drum. In several places in Bengal this image is worshipped daily.

Shivũ, under this name, is regent of Kashẽẽ, (Benares.) All persons dying at Benares are intitled to a place in Shivu's heaven; but if any one violate the laws of the shastrũ during his residence there, Kalũ-Bhoirũvu at death grinds him between two mill-stones.



SECT. V.—*Worship to cure the Itch and Scurvy.*

THE goddess Shẽẽtula is worshipped by the Hindoo females whenever their families are afflicted with the itch; and the god Ghẽtoo (a black boiling pot) is wor-

shipped to remove the scurvy or any kind of blotches on the skin.



In the preceding sections of this work, the god Prit'hi-vēē, regent of the earth, should have been noticed: he has no separate worship, but certain formulas are repeated in his name at all the great festivals.—Vishnoo is revered as the Household God; he is worshipped when a person enters a new house, or at any other time to procure the removal of family misfortunes.—Doorga should have been mentioned also as the Village Goddess; she is worshipped by the villagers in the month Asharhū, before a jar of water, when bloody sacrifices are offered. An annual festival is also held in each village in Asharhū, in honour of Vishnoo, Indrū, Koovérū, and Lūkshmēē; when the persons pay the first instalment of their rents. The landowner is at the expense.

CHAP. VIII.

WORSHIP OF BEINGS IN STRANGE SHAPES.

SECT. I.—*Urdhū-narēshwūrū*^h.

HERE Shivū and Doorga are united in one body, white and yellow. The origin of this image is thus given in the *Lingū pooranū*:—Shivū and Doorga after their marriage lived on mount Koilasū, where Doorga kept the house, cooked, and nursed her two children, Gūnēshū and Kartikū; and Shivū supported the family as a mendicant. On a certain occasion, Shivū, having one day smoked intoxicating herbs to excess, was unable to go his daily rounds. Doorga informed him that there was nothing in the house; that the family had eaten half of what was collected the day before, and that Gūnēshū's rat and Kartikū's peacockⁱ had devoured the rest. After much altercation, Shivū left his hut, and Doorga, to avoid perishing for want, went to her father's, taking her children with her. On the way Narūdū met her, and advised her to assume the form of the goddess *Ūnnū-pōōrna*^k, and lay an embargo on all the food where Shivū would ask for alms. She did so; and Shivū begged in vain for a handful of rice. Narūdū at length meeting Shivū also, persuaded him to return to his wife: Doorga received him with joy, and relieved his hunger;

^h *Urdhū*, half; *narēē*, woman; *ēeshwūrū*, a name of Shivū.

ⁱ Gūnēshū rides on a rat, and Kartikū on a peacock.

^k One of the forms of Doorga, as the regent of food.

which so pleased the old mendicant, that in pressing her in his arms both bodies became one.

In the Radha-tüntrü it is said, that Shivü and Doorga assumed this form in order to prove that Shivü is the one Brümhü, in whom both the male and female powers are united.

In one of the smaller Hindoo poems, a different account of the origin of this image is given :—Shivü, finding it very difficult to procure a subsistence by the alms which he daily collected, especially as Doorga had ten mouths, and Gүнэшü a very large belly, agreed with his wife, that they should assume one body, which would be supported with less labour.

Notwithstanding this apparently close union of Shivü and Doorga, the Shivopa-khyanü, a poem, contains a story, in which Doorga is represented as quarrelling with Shivü in a fit of jealousy, on account of his begging in that part of Shivü-poorü¹ where the women of ill-fame live.—On another occasion, as related in the Ramayünü, a dreadful quarrel took place betwixt Shivü and Doorga, because Pürüşoo-ramü had beaten Kartikü and Gүнэшü, the two sons of Doorga. Another account of these quarrels is given both in the Ramayünü and the Mühabharütü :—Ramü's efforts to destroy Ravünü proving abortive, in consequence of the protection afforded the giant by Shivü, all the gods whom Ravünü had oppressed joined Ramü in supplications to Shivü : and on the seventh day, when Ravünü was to be slain, the gods resolved to be present ; and Shivü was about to join them, when Doorga interfered, and asked him how

¹ Shivü's heaven.

he could witness the destruction of his own disciple : that disciple, who had stood praying to him all day in the sultry weather, surrounded with four fires ; who had continued his devotions in the chilling cold, standing in the water ; and had persevered in his supplications, standing on his head in the midst of torrents of rain?—Here she poured a volley of abuse upon Shivŭ, as a withered old fellow who smoaked intoxicating herbs ; covered himself with ashes ; dwelt in cemeteries ; a beggar ; whose name would never be remembered ;—‘and dost thou think,’ said she, ‘that I shall be present at such a sight?’—Shivŭ could no longer smother his resentment, but reproached her in the severest terms, reminding her that she was only a woman, and knew nothing : and indeed that she did not act like woman, for she was continually wandering from place to place ; engaged in wars ; was a drunkard ; spent her time with degraded beings ; killed giants, drank their blood, and hung the skulls round her neck. Doorga was enraged to madness by these cutting reproaches, so that the gods became alarmed, and intreated Ramŭ to join in supplications to Doorga, or there would be no possibility of destroying Ravŭnŭ. He did so, and so pleased the goddess by his flatteries, that she was at length brought to consent to the destruction of Ravŭnŭ.

At the new or full moon, or on the 8th or 14th of the moon in any month, or on the last day of any calendar month, in the day, the usual ceremonies of worship are performed before this disgusting image, which is thrown into the water the succeeding day. The formulas are those used in the worship of Doorga, not of Shivŭ. Animals are slain and offered to the goddess.

SECT. II.—*Krishnū-Kalēē.*

THIS scandalous image is worshipped annually at the total wane of the moon^m in Kartikū, in the night.

Of all the milkmaids that used to collect around him, Krishnū was most charmed with Radha, the wife of Ayūnū-ghoshū. When the attachment was first formed, the sister of Ayūnū-ghoshū saw them together, and informed her brother of the circumstance; at which Radha became very much alarmed, assured Krishnū that her sister-in-law had seen her with him, and that her husband would certainly destroy her. Krishnū commanded her not to fear, adding, if her husband came, he would assume the form of Kalēē, and she should be found in the act of worship. When her husband and others arrived, they found her thus employed, and joined her in her devotions. Could it be believed that such an abominable instance of adultery and treachery would be made the subject of worship?—yet so it is. Four images are made from this story, viz. Krishnū-Kalēē, Radha, Ayūnū-ghoshū, and Kootila, Ayūnū's sister.—Bloody sacrifices are offered to this image; but the worshippers of Krishnū are ashamed, when asked by the shaktūs, if Krishnū has begun to drink blood?

SECT. III.—*Hūrēē-Hūrū.*

HERE Vishnoo (Hūrēē) and Shivū (Hūrū) appear in one body; the former is black, and the latter white. The image has four arms and two feet.

^m A very proper time for such a worship. Let neither sun nor moon shine on such deeds.

The origin of this image is thus recorded in the Vishnoo pooranũ :—Lũkshmẽẽ and Doorga were once sitting together in the presence of Shivũ, when Lũkshmẽẽ contended that her husband (Vishnoo) was greater than Shivũ ; which Doorga as firmly denied. Lũkshmẽẽ said, her husband must be greatest, since Shivũ had worshipped him. In the midst of this conversation Vishnoo arrived, and to convince Lũkshmẽẽ that both were equal, he immediately entered the body of Shivũ, and they became one.

Another account of the origin of this image is given in the Kashẽẽ-khũndũ, a part of the Skũndũ pooranũ.—On a certain occasion, when Vishnoo and Shivũ were conversing together, Shivũ requested Vishnoo to assume the beautiful female form which he had formerly done at the churning of the sea : to which he consented ; when Shivũ, overpowered with desire, pursued the flying beauty, till, overcome with fatigue, she hid herself behind a tree, and reassumed the form of Vishnoo. Shivũ, however, embraced Vishnoo with such eagerness, that the bodies of both became one ⁿ.

The worship of this image takes place whenever any one pleases. Stone images in some places are continually preserved ; and in others a clay one is made, and worshipped, and afterwards committed to the river.

Raja Krishnũ-chũndrũ-rayũ expended fifty or sixty thousand roopees at the consecration of a stone image of Huree-Hũrũ, which may be still seen at Gũnga-vasũ, near Nũ-deeya. While this raja lived, fifty roopees were daily expended in this worship ; yet, though a number of villages

ⁿ The reader need not be informed how much this story in its termination resembles that of the nymph Salmacis, who is said to have fallen excessively in love with a son of Mercury by his sister Venus.

have been bequeathed to the god, the expense of the daily worship and offerings is less now than formerly. Few places in Bengal, however, can now boast of a temple at which fifty roopees are daily expended °. No bloody sacrifices are offered to this image.

However shocked a professed Christian may be at reading such accounts, and however revolting to every feeling of modesty and decency these stories may be, the Hindoo philosophers have thought proper to perpetuate them, and in this image to personify lust itself. The bramhũns also bow down to this image as to a deity worthy of adoration.

° This expense is incurred in the meat-offerings, consisting of rice, peas, salt, oil, ghee, butter, sugar, sweetmeats, fruits of different kinds, herbs, spices, betle nuts, &c. ; in the offerings of cloth, metal vessels, and other things ; and in the wages of the bramhũns and shōōdrũs employed. About ten bramhũns and fourteen shōōdrũs constantly attend on the service of this image.

CHAP. IX.

WORSHIP OF HUMAN BEINGS.

Deified Men and Women.

ALL the bramhuns, but especially the religious guides, (gooroo,) are objects of worship among the Hindoos, and have divine honours paid to them. The spiritual guide, in the estimation of the disciple, is literally a god. Whenever he approaches, the disciple prostrates himself in the dust before him, and never sits in his presence without leave. He drinks the water with which he has washed the feet of his gooroo °, and relies entirely upon his blessing for final happiness. I have heard some Hindoos speak with comparative contempt of all other ways of salvation. When the claims of the bramhuns to deity have been disputed by any one, I have seen the poor besotted shōōdrū prostrate himself at the feet of the nearest bramhūn, and, raising his head, and closing his hands, say, 'You are my god.' At the same time the character of the bramhūn has perhaps been notorious for every vice.

The shastrūs declare that the daughters of bramhuns, till they are eight years old, are objects of worship, as forms of the goddess Bhūgūvūtēē; and some persons worship these girls daily. The worshipper, taking the daughter of

° Doing reverence to the very feet of superiors prevailed among the Jews. Hence the woman washed the feet of Christ, and wiped them with the hair of her head. Paul was brought up at the feet of Gamaliel.

some neighbouring bramhūn, and placing her on a seat, performs the ceremonies of worship; in which he presents to her flowers, paint, water, garlands^p, incense, and, if a rich man, offerings of cloth and ornaments. He closes the whole by prostrating himself before the girl. At the worship of some of the female deities also, the daughters of bramhūns have divine honours paid to them.

The wives of bramhūns are also worshipped occasionally as an act of great merit. A man of property sometimes invites ten, twenty, or one hundred of these females, and repeating before them forms of prayer, praise, &c. worships them, and at the close entertains them with the offerings. This is frequently done at Benares.

On the 14th of the decrease of the moon in Shravānū, at the time of the Savitrēē vrūṭū, the wives of bramhūns very generally worship their husbands. The worshipper, having placed a seat for her husband, and presented him with new garments, entertains him to be seated, and puts round his neck a garland of flowers. She then anoints his body with fragrant ointments, and performs before him the various ceremonies which belong to the worship of the gods. In presenting the offerings she says, regarding her husband as a form of Vishnū, ‘Oh! husband, grant that I may long live in the marriage state, and never become a widow.’ The husband then partakes of the offerings, and the wife having walked round him either three or seven times, the service ends. The origin of this ceremony is given in the Brūmhū-voivūrttū pooranū, but the story is too long for insertion.

^p Both the Greeks and Romans, it is well known, used to adorn their images with garlands at the time of worship.

Many of the tūntrūs, and particularly the Roodrūyamūlū, the Yonēē-tūntrū, and the Nēēlū-tūntrū, contain directions respecting a most extraordinary and shocking mode of worship, which is understood in a concealed manner amongst the Hindoos by the name of Chūkrū. These shastrūs direct, that the person who wishes to perform this ceremony must first, in the night, choose a woman as the object of worship. If the person be a dūkshinacharēē, he must take his own wife; and if a vamacharēē, the daughter of a dancer, a kūpalee, a washerman, a barber, a chūndalū, or of a Mūsulman, or a prostitute; and place her on a seat, or mat: and then bring broiled fish, flesh, fried peas, rice, spirituous liquors, sweetmeats, flowers, and other offerings; which, as well as the female, must be purified by the repeating of incantations. To this succeeds the worship of the guardian deity; and after this, that of the female,—who sits naked.

* * * * *

Here things too abominable to enter the ears of man, and impossible to be revealed to a Christian public, are contained in the directions of the shastrū. The learned bramhūn who opened to me these abominations, made several efforts—paused and began again—and then paused again—before he could mention the shocking indecencies prescribed by his own shastrūs.

As the object of worship is a living person, she partakes of the offerings, even of the spirituous liquors; and of the flesh, though it should be that of the cow. The refuse is eaten by the persons present, however different their casts; nor must any one refuse to partake of the offerings. The spirituous liquors must be drunk by measure; and the company while eating must put food into each other's mouths.

The priest then—in the presence of all—behaves towards this female in a manner which decency forbids to be mentioned; after which the persons present repeat many times the name of some god, performing actions unutterably abominable : and here this most diabolical business closes. The benefits promised to the worshippers are riches, absorption in Brūmhū, &c.

At present the persons committing these abominations (vamacharēēs) are becoming more and more numerous ; and in proportion as they increase, the ceremonies are more and more indecent. They are performed in secret ; but that these practices are becoming very frequent among the bramhūns and others, is a fact known to all. Those who abide by the rules of the shastrūs are comparatively few : the generality confine themselves chiefly to those parts that belong to gluttony, drunkenness, and whoredom, without acquainting themselves with all the minute rules and incantations of the shastrūs.

CHAP. X.

THE WORSHIP OF BEASTS.

SECT. I.—*The Cow.*

BRŪMHA created the bramhūns and the cow at the same time: the bramhūns to read the formulas, and the cow to afford milk, (clarified butter,) for the burnt-offerings. The gods by partaking of the burnt-offerings are said to enjoy exquisite pleasure, and men by eating clarified butter destroy their sins. The cow is called the mother of the gods, and is declared by Brūmha to be a proper object of worship.

The shastrū appoints that the images of the gods shall be anointed with milk, curds, clarified butter, cow-dung, and cows' urine, whereby they become free from impurity; and all unclean places are purified with cow-dung. Indeed many bramhūns do not go out of the house in a morning, till the door-way has been rubbed with cow-dung.

The cow was created on the first of Voishakhū, and on this day, or on the second of the moon in Jyoisht'hū, she is worshipped annually. No image is used, but the worship is performed in the cow-house before a jar of water. The ceremonies are the same as those before the images of the gods: the prayers are necessarily peculiar to the object worshipped. The officiating bramhūn, at the close of the

service, reads the whole of the Chündēē, a poem relating to the wars of Doorga. On the 13th of Phalagoonū, the milkmen paint the horns and hoofs of their cattle yellow, and bathe them in the river. Persons strict in their religion worship the cow daily: after bathing, they throw flowers at her feet, and feed her with fresh grass, saying, 'O Bhūgū-vūtee! eat;' and then walk round her three or seven times, making obeisance.

If you speak among Hindoos of eating the flesh of cows, they immediately raise their hands to their ears: yet milkmen, carmen, and farmers, beat the cow as unmercifully as a carrier of coals beats his ass in England; and many starve them to death in the cold weather, rather than be at the expense of giving them food^a. Thus is the cow at once a beast of burden and a goddess. Some of the poor think themselves happy if they can support a cow, as by serving this animal they expect reward in a future state. If a man sell his cow, the shastrūs threaten him with the torments of hell during as many thousand years as there are hairs on her body. If any one neglect to burn cow-dung, &c. in the cow-house, whereby smoke is raised, and the musquitoes prevented from hurting the cows, he will descend into the hell of musquitoes and gad-flies. The gift of a cow to a bramhūn is an act of great merit.

The dung of the cow is gathered and dried as fuel amongst the Hindoos. Some cows are of more value for their dung than for their milk; for the Bengal cow gives very little milk indeed, compared with the European cow.

^a In the year 1812, a bramhūn was convicted before the magistrate of Serampore, of stealing from a relative a cow in calf, and offering this goddess for sale to a butcher.

SECT. II.—*The Monkey.*

THE black-faced monkey, Hūnooman^b, the son of the god Pūvūnū, by Ūnjūna, a female monkey^c, is believed to be an incarnation of Shivū.

The Hindoos worship Hūnooman on their birth-day to obtain long life, which they suppose this monkey can bestow, as he is immortal. In some temples his image is set up alone, and in others with that of Ramū and Sēēta, and worshipped daily. The worship of Ramū is always preceded by a few ceremonies in honour of Hūnooman.

Stone images of Hūnooman are kept in the houses of some of his disciples, and worshipped daily. The worshipper of this animal is promised every gratification he can desire.

Many Hindoos receive the initiating incantation by which this monkey becomes their guardian deity. The mark which these disciples make on their foreheads is the same as that made by the followers of Shivū.

About twenty years ago, Eeshwūrū-chūndrū, the raja of Nūdēeya, spent 100,000 roopees in marrying two monkeys^d,

^b Hūnooman broke his cheek-bone by a fall from the sun's orbit; and his name is derived from hūnoo, the cheek bone.

^c There is nothing too filthy for idolatry: here the god of the winds pays his addresses to a monkey, as Jupiter is said to have done to a swan.

^d At this time none of these monkeys were to be seen about Nūdēeya; now they are so numerous that they devour almost all the fruit of the orchards, as the inhabitants are afraid of hurting them.

when all the parade common at Hindoo marriages was exhibited. In the marriage procession were seen elephants, camels, horses richly caparisoned, palanqueens, lamps, and flambeaus; the male monkey was fastened in a fine palanqueen, having a crown upon his head, with men standing by his side to fan him; then followed singing and dancing girls in carriages; every kind of Hindoo music; a grand display of fireworks, &c. Dancing, music, singing, and every degree of low mirth, were exhibited at the bridegroom's palace for twelve days together. At the time of the marriage ceremony, learned bramhũns were employed in reading the formulas from the shastrũs!

Amongst men of sense the performance of the ceremonies of worship before the image of this monkey is attended with a degree of disgrace. I have heard of a quarrel between two bramhũns, one of whom was paid by a rich Hindoo to repeat the ceremonies of Hindoo worship before the image of Hũnooman, daily, at his house: amidst the quarrel the other said, 'Thou refuse of bramhũns! thou gainest a subsistence by worshipping a monkey.'

Stories of this god.—When Hũnooman first saw the rising sun, thinking it a ripe fruit, he leaped up to the residence of the god of day, and seized his chariot: Indrũ fearing Hũnooman would swallow the glorious luminary, with his thunderbolt smote him to the earth, where he lay lifeless. His distracted mother applied to his father Pũvũnũ, who, enraged at the loss of his sũn, retired into an inaccessible chasm, and bound up the wind, till both men and gods began to perish. Brũmha, Vishnoo, Shivũ, and other gods now petitioned Pũvũnũ; but he refused them the privilege of breathing, unless they would make Hũnooman immortal. Brũmha then bestowed on Hũnooman the water of life, and

Pūvūnū restored to men and gods the vital air.—When ten years old, Hūnooman was possessed of immense strength. He brought a stone, from a mountain, sixteen or twenty miles in circumference, and threw it into a pool of water where a number of sages were at worship. This raised the water, so that the sages, who had closed their eyes in the act of meditation, began to sink. After a few struggles they regained the land, and again sat down with closed eyes to their work. Hūnooman next took out the stone, and the waters retired; and when the sages put out their hands to take up water for worship, they were again disappointed. Opening their eyes, they saw the water had sunk exceedingly; and following it, again closed their eyes, and sat down. Hūnooman again flung in the stone, and the sages began to sink. He continued to repeat these frolics, till the sages, discovering the culprit, took away his strength. The sagacious monkey now began to flatter the sages; brought them fruits, &c. from the forest, and performed, with agility, every act of menial service. After three years they blessed him, and assured him that, when he should see Ramū upon mount Rishyūmōōkū, he should obtain twice his former strength.—On a certain occasion Hūnooman was resolved to put the strength of Bhēēmū to trial, as he was reputed to be so tremendous a giant: and lengthening his tail, he threw it across the path. As the Hindoos never stride across a person's body, or even his shadow, Bhēēmū requested Hūnooman to take up his tail: but he complained he was grown old and could not. At last Bhēēmū stooped to lift it out of his way; he tried at the end, and then at the middle, but found, giant as he was, he could not lift up this monkey's tail. Overcome with astonishment, he began to praise Hūnooman, and at length prevailed on him to promise that he would help the Pandūvūs in their expected war with Dooryodhūnū.

SECT. III.—*The Dog*

Carries Kalū-Bhoirūvū, a form of Shīvū, and therefore receives the worship of the Hindoos whenever his master is worshipped*. I have heard also that there are many Hindoos in the west of Hindoost'hanū, who pay their devotions to the dog, and become his disciples. Though the dog is thus placed amongst the objects of worship, he is mentioned in the Mūhabharūtū as an unclean animal: every offering which he approaches is rendered unacceptable to the gods, and every one who touches him must purify himself by bathing.

SECT. IV.—*The Shackal.*

THE Tūntrūs mention an incarnation of Doorga in the form of the shackal, when she carried the child Krishnū over the Yūmoona, in his flight from king Kūngsū. All the worshippers of the female deities adore the shackal as a form of this goddess, especially the vama-charēēs, who present offerings to him daily. Every worshipper lays the offerings on a clean place in his house, and calls the god to come and partake of them. As this is done at the hour when the shackals leave their lurking places, one of these animals sometimes comes and eats the food in the presence of the worshipper: this will not appear wonderful when it is considered, that the same animal finds food placed for him in this place every day. In temples dedicated to Doorga and other deities, a stone image of the shackal is

* The dog, it will be remembered, was consecrated to Mars.

placed on a pedestal, and daily worshipped. When a shackal passes a Hindoo, he must bow to it; and if it pass on the left hand, it is a most lucky circumstance.

SECT. V.—*Other Animals worshipped.*

THE elephant, the lion, the bull, the buffalo, the rat, the deer, the goat, &c. are worshipped at the festivals of the gods whom they respectively carry, that is, of Indrū, Doorga, Shivū, Yūmū, Gūnēshū, Pūvūnū, and Brūmha.

CHAP. XI.

THE WORSHIP OF BIRDS.

SECT. I.—*Gūroorū*^a.

THIS god, with the head and wings of a bird^b, and the rest of his body like that of a man, is called the king of the birds, and the carrier of Vishnoo. Vinūta, the wife of Kūshyūpū, the progenitor of gods and men, laid an egg^c, and became the mother of this bird-god. As soon as *Gūroorū* was born, his body expanded till it touched the sky; all the other animals were terrified at him; his eyes were like lightning; the mountains fled with the wind of his wings, and the rays which issued from his body set the four quarters of the world on fire. The affrighted gods sought the help of Ūgnee, conceiving that *Gūroorū* must be an incarnation of the god of fire.

In consequence of a dispute betwixt Vinūta, the mother of *Gūroorū*, and Kūdroo, the mother of the serpents, respecting the colour of the horse procured at the churning of the sea, a continual enmity has subsisted betwixt the

^a Some suppose *Gūroorū* to be a large species of vulture, and others the gigantic crane.

^b *Gūroorū* in some degree resembles Mercury, viz. in his having wings, and being the messenger of Vishnoo, as Mercury was of Jupiter.

^c Jupiter is said to have been enamoured of the goddess Nemesis in the shape of a goose; and that she laid an egg, from which was born Helena.

descendants of these females; and Gūroorū once obtained permission from one of the gods to devour all the serpents he could find^d.

The story of Gūroorū's becoming the carrier of Vishnoo is thus related in the Mūhabharūtū:—His mother in the above dispute having laid a wager, and being the loser, was reduced to a state of servitude to her sister; and the serpents, wishing to become immortal, promised to liberate his mother on condition that Gūroorū should bring Chūndrū, (the moon;) whose bright parts, the Hindoos say, are filled with the water of immortality. Before Gūroorū departed, he asked his mother for some food. She advised him to go to the sea shore, and gather up whatever he could see; but conjured him to beware of eating a bramhūn: adding, 'Should you at any time feel a burning heat in your stomach, be sure you have eaten a bramhūn.' Thus instructed, he began his journey: at his flight the three worlds were agitated like the sea at the great deluge. Passing by a country inhabited by fishermen, he at one inspiration drew in houses, trees, cattle, men, and other animals; but, among the inhabitants swallowed, one was a bramhūn, who caused such an intolerable burning in his bowels, that Gūroorū, unable to bear it, called, in the greatest haste, for him to come out. The bramhūn refused, unless his wife, a fisherman's daughter, might accompany him; to which Gūroorū consented. Pursuing his journey, Gūroorū met his father Kūshyūpū, who directed him to appease his hunger at a certain lake where an elephant and a tortoise were fighting. The body of the tortoise was eighty miles long, and the elephant's one hundred and

^d When the Hindoos lie down to sleep, they repeat the name of Gūroorū three times, to obtain protection from snakes.

sixty. Gūroorū with one claw seized the elephant, with the other the tortoise, and perched with them on a tree eight hundred miles high ; but the tree was unable to bear the ponderous weight, and unhappily thousands of pigmy bramhūns were then worshipping on one of its branches. Trembling lest he should destroy any of them, he took the bough in his beak, continuing to hold the elephant and tortoise in his claws, and flew to a mountain in an uninhabited country, where he finished his repast on the tortoise and elephant. Gūroorū, having surmounted astonishing dangers, at last seized the moon, and concealed it under his wing : but on his return was attacked by Indrū and other gods, all of whom, however, except Vishnoo, he overcame ; and even he was so severely put to it in the contest, that he came to terms with Gūroorū, who was made immortal, and promised a higher seat than Vishnoo, while Gūroorū on his part became the carrier of Vishnoo. Since this time Vishnoo rides on Gūroorū ; while the latter, in the shape of a flag, sits at the top of Vishnoo's car.

Gūroorū is worshipped at the great festivals before the different images of Vishnoo ; but has no separate time of worship. His image is placed in the temples dedicated to various forms of Vishnoo ; and some persons receive his name as their guardian deity, and repeat it daily.

Gūroorū's two sons, Sūmpatee and Jūtayoo, once flew, as a trial of strength, up to the sun ; but the wings of Sūmpatee were burnt off. Gūroorū resides in Kooshū-dwēpū, one of the seven islands into which the Hindoos divide the earth.

Names. Gūroomūt, or, he who is clothed with feathers.—Gūroorū, he who swallows [serpents, and throws

up their bones.]—Tarkshyū, from Tūrkshyū, the father of Gūroorū.—Voinūtéyū, from Vinūta.—Khūgēshwūrū, the lord of the feathered tribes.—Nagantūkū, the destroyer of the serpents, (nagūs.)—Vishnoo-rūt'hū, the carrier of Vishnoo.—Soopūrnū, he whose feathers are of the colour of gold.—Pūnnūga-shūnū, the devourer of the serpents.

—◆—

SECT. II.—*Uroonū*,

THE elder brother of Gūroorū, is the charioteer of Sōōryū, the sun ; and is worshipped with his master, as well as at the festivals of other gods. The image of this god is that of a man without thighs.

—◆—

SECT. III.—*Jūtayoo*.

THIS bird is the friend of Ramū, and is worshipped at the same festival with him. He is mentioned in the preceding account of Ramū.

—◆—

SECT. IV.—*Shūnkūrū Chillū, or the Eagle of Coromandel.*

THIS is the white-headed kite, commonly called the bramhūnee kite. It is considered as an incarnation of Doorga, and is revered by the Hindoos, who bow to it whenever it passes them.

SECT. V.—*Khūnjūnū, or the Wag-tail,*

Is considered as a form of Vishnool, on account of the mark on its throat, supposed to resemble the shalgramū. The Hindoos honour it in the same manner as they do the eagle of Coromandel.

SECT. VI.—*Other Birds worshipped.*

THE peacock, the goose, and the owl^e, are worshipped at the festivals of Kartikū, Brūmha, and Lūkshmēē.

^e If, however, the owl, the vulture, or any other unclean birds, perch upon the house of a Hindoo, it is an unlucky omen, and the effect must be removed by the performance of the following expiatory ceremony: 'If a vulture, a heron, a dove, an owl, a hawk, a gull, a kite, a Bhasha, or a Pundura, should settle upon a house, the wife, or a child, or some other person belonging to the master of the house, will die, or some other calamity will befall him within a year afterwards. To prevent this, the house, or its value in money, must be given to bramhūns; or a peace-offering of an extraordinary nature must be offered: viz. five productions of the cow, the five gems, the five nectareous juices, the five twigs of trees, and the five astringents, are to be put into a pot of water; the guardian deities of the quarters of the universe must then be worshipped, and an hundred and eight oblations of clarified butter must be made with a sacrificial piece of the wood of the Khadira tree, while the prayer of Mrit-voonjūyū is repeated. The oblation, called the mūha-vyadhee homū, is to be performed at the commencement, or at the end of this ceremony. Oblations of clarified butter, at each of which the gayitree is repeated, are then to be made to Vishnool, the nine planets, Udbhootū, and the household gods; which being done, the bramhūns must be entertained with clarified butter and rice milk. The sacrificial fees must then be paid, and water sprinkled with appropriate incantations; when an assurance that all has been duly performed being given, a prostration is made to the bramhūns, and the benediction received from them.'

CHAP. XII.

THE WORSHIP OF TREES.

TREES are worshipped by the Hindoos as the forms of particular gods: the ūshwütü and vütü are representatives of Vishnoo, and the vilwü that of Shivü. The devout Hindoos worship them, water their roots, plant them near their houses, &c. The Hindoo females, who are never seen in the streets, plant a sacred tree within the compound, that they may not lose the merit of watering it in the sultry months. The female shōōdrüs, to honour the wives of bramhüns, carry water to these trees, and on a fortunate day make offerings to them.

SECT. I.—*The Toolüsee*^a.

THE Hindoos have no public festival in honour of this plant; but they occasionally prostrate themselves before it, repeating a form of prayer or praise: they have great faith also in the power of its leaves to cure diseases, and use it with incantations to expel the poison of serpents. They plant it also before their houses, and in the morning cleanse the place around it with water and cow-dung; and in the evening place a lamp near it. Throughout the month Voishakhü they suspend a large pot over it filled with water, and let the water drop upon it through a small hole.

^a Basil, Ocimum gratissimum, and O. sanctum. The myrtle was sacred to Venus.

Whenever any of these plants die, it is considered a sacred duty to commit them to the river; and when a person is brought to the river side to die, his relations plant a branch of the toolūsee near the dying man's head. A pillar, hollow at the top, is erected by many Hindoos, in which they deposit earth, and set the plant. They walk round these pillars and bow to the plant; which actions are declared by the shastrūs to be very meritorious.

The origin of the worship of the Toolūsee is thus related in the Vishnoo pooranū, and in the Toolūsee-Mahatmū:—Toolūsee, a female, was engaged for a long time in religious austerities; and at length asked this blessing of Vishnoo, that she might become his wife. Lūkshmēē, Vishnoo's wife, hearing this, cursed the woman, and changed her into a Toolūsee plant^b; but Vishnoo promised, that he would assume the form of the shalgramū, and always continue with her. The Hindoos, therefore, continually keep one leaf of the toolūsee under and another upon the shalgramū.

^b Apollo changed the youth Cyparissus into a cypress tree. Daphne was changed into a laurel.

SECT. II.—*Other sacred Trees.*

THE ūshwŭttŭ^c, vŭtŭ^d, vŭkoolŭ^e, hŭritŭkēē^f, amŭlŭ-kēē^g, vilwŭ^h, and nimbŭⁱ trees receive divine honours from the Hindoos, and are set apart with the same ceremonies as are common at the setting up of an image of the gods. These ceremonies take place either at the time of planting the tree, or after the person has watered and nourished it for some time. An individual who consecrates an ūshwŭttŭ or a vŭtŭ, considering these trees as continuing to flourish many years, says, ‘Oh! Vishnoo! grant that, for planting this tree, I may continue as many years in heaven as this tree shall remain growing in the earth!’ The person expects too, that as he has set apart this tree to afford shade to his fellow creatures, so after death he will not be scorched by excessive heat in his journey to Yŭmŭ, the regent of death.

^c *Ficus religiosa*. This and other trees are never injured, nor cut down, nor burnt by devout Hindoos. I was once informed by a bramhŭn, that his grand father planted one of these trees near his house, which has now spread its branches so widely, that, as my informant affirmed, 2000 persons may stand under it; and so much is this tree revered by his family, that they do not suffer its withered branches to be burnt.

^d *Ficus Indica*, vulgarly called the banyan tree.

^e *Mimusops elengi*.

^f *Terminalia citrina*.

^g *Phyllanthus emblica*.

^h *Ægle marmelos*.

ⁱ *Melia azodaracta*.

CHAP. XIII.

THE WORSHIP OF RIVERS.

RIVERS are to be placed among the objects of Hindoo worship^k: they are of both genders, Nūdū and Nūdēē. The worship of these rivers is performed at auspicious seasons, as laid down in the shastrū, and at some of the great festivals. Certain places also of these rivers are peculiarly sacred, and draw to them great numbers of devotees; as, the source of the Ganges; the union of the Ganges, the Yūmoona, and the Sūrūswütēē at Prūyagū¹; the branching of this united river into three streams at Trivénēē; the place where the Ganges disembogues *itself* into the sea, &c. Their waters are used for food, bathing, medicine, religious ceremonies, &c. and formerly when a Hindoo king was crowned, they were poured upon his head as a part of his consecration.

 SECT. I.—Gūnga.

THIS goddess is represented as a white woman, wearing a crown, sitting on the sea animal Mūkūrū, and having in

^k The notion of certain rivers being sacred, seems to have prevailed amongst other heathen nations. Hence Naaman, the Syrian, said, 'Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? May I not wash in them and be clean?'

¹ It is ascertained, that there are six places of this name, five of which are situated on the river Ulūkanūnda. See Asiatic Researches, vol. xi.

her right hand a water-lily, and in her left the lute. She is called the daughter of mount Himavūt, though some of the pooranūs declare that she was produced from the sweat of Vishnoo's foot, which Brūmha caught and preserved in his alms' dish.

The grandfather of Bēēshmū was one day performing religious austerities near the Ganges, when the goddess fell in love with him, and, in order to persuade him to a union, went and sat upon his right knee. He told her that the left knee was the proper place for the wife, and the right for the son: that therefore she should not become his, but be united to his son; whose name was Santūnoo. After Santūnoo and Gūnga had been married some time, she was about to leave him; but consented to stay, on condition that she might kill all her children at their birth. When the first child was born, she threw it into the river, and so on to the seventh inclusive. As she was destroying the eighth, Santūnoo forbid her, in consequence of which the child was saved, but she abandoned her paramour. The whole of this was to fulfil a curse pronounced by Vishnoo on the eight gods named Ūshtū-vūsoo.

The Ramayūnū, Mūhabharūtū, and the Gūnga-khūndū, a part of the Skūndū pooranū, give long accounts of the descent of Gūnga from heaven:—Sūgūrū, a king, having no children, entered upon a long course of austere devotions; in the midst of which Bhrigoo appeared to him, and promised, that from the eldest queen should be born sixty thousand children, and from the other only a single child. After some time, the queen was delivered—of a pumpkin! which the king in anger dashed to the ground, when the fruit was broken, and, to his astonishment, he saw children rising from it; and, calling sixty thousand nurses, put each

child into a pan of milk. The other wife had a son, whom they called Ūngshooman. After these sons were grown up, the king resolved to perform once more the sacrifice of a horse before his death, and committed the victim to the care of his sixty thousand sons. The person who performs this sacrifice one hundred times, succeeds to the throne of heaven. On this occasion the reigning Indrū was alarmed, this being Sūgūrū's hundredth sacrifice. To prevent its taking effect, therefore, he descended to the earth, and assuming another form, privately carried off the horse, which he placed in patalū, near to Kūpilū, a sage. The sixty thousand sons, after searching throughout the earth in vain, began to dig into patalū^c, where they found the horse standing by the side of Kūpilū, who was absorbed in his devotions. Incensed at the old man, whom they supposed to be the thief, they began to beat him; when, awaking from his abstraction of mind, he reduced them all to ashes. The king for a long time heard no more of his sons; but at length Narūdū informed him of the catastrophe. He then sent his son Ūngshooman down to the sage, who delivered up the horse, and informed the king, that if he could bring the goddess Gūngā from heaven^d, his sons might be restored to him. The king offered the sacrifice, and placing Ūngshooman on the throne, took up his residence in a forest as a hermit, where he died. Ūngshooman, in his turn, making his son Dwileepū his successor, died also in a forest. Dwileepū had two wives, but no children; he therefore abdicated the throne, and em-

^c The Hindoo writers say, that the seven seas were thus formed by the sons of Suguru. Some accounts add, that not finding a place large enough to contain the earth which they thus dug up—they devoured it!

^d Or, as it is explained, if he could perform the funeral rites for these sixty thousand persons with the efficacious waters of the Ganges, they would be delivered from the curse, and ascend to heaven.

bracing the life of a hermit, sought of the gods a son, and the deliverance of the sons of Sūgūrū. Shivū promised him, that by means of his two queens a son should be born. These women lived together, and after some time the youngest had a son, whom they called Bhūgēerūt'hū^e; who, however, was only a mass of flesh. Though greatly moved at the sight of such a child, they preserved it, and in time it grew up to manhood. One day Ūshtū-vūkrū, a moonee, who was hump-backed, and wriggled in walking, called to see these females; when Bhūgēerūt'hū, in rising to salute the sage, trembled and wriggled in such a manner, that Ūshtū-vūkrū, thinking he was mocking him, said, 'If thou canst not help wriggling thus, be a perfect child; but if thou art mocking me, be destroyed.' The boy immediately became perfect, and the sage gave him his blessing. When Bhūgēerūt'hū was grown up, he addressed his prayers to different gods for the restoration of his sixty thousand relations—but in vain; at length Brūmha, moved by his piety, gave him a single drop of the water, and Vishnoo giving him a shell which he blew, Gūnga followed him. As she had to fall from heaven to earth, Bhūgēerūt'hū was afraid lest the earth should be crushed by her fall: wherefore Shivū, standing on mount Himavūt, caught Gūnga in his bunch of matted hair, and detained her there for some time; but at length suffered one drop to fall on the mountain: and from thence, on the tenth of the increase of the moon in Jyoisht'hū, the goddess touched the earth, and which ever way Bhūgēerūt'hū went blowing the conch, there Gūnga followed him.

Several very curious circumstances happened to Gunga

* This story is so extremely indelicate, that it is impossible to translate it.

as she passed along. In one place she ran near Jūnhoo, a sage, and washed away his mendicant's dish, the flowers for worship, &c. upon which he, in anger, took her up, and swallowed her. At the intreaties of Bhūgēērūt'hū, however, the sage let her pass out at his thigh, on which account Gūnga received the name of Janhūvē.

On they went, till Gūnga asked Bhūgēērūt'hū where these sixty thousand relations were whom she was to deliver. He being unable to inform her, she, to make sure of their deliverance, at the entrance of the sea, divided herself into one hundred streams^f, and ran down into patalū; where, as soon as the waters of Gūnga touched their ashes, they were delivered from the curse, and ascended in chariots to heaven.

When Gūnga was brought from heaven, the gods, conscious that their sins also needed washing away, petitioned Brūmha on the subject, who soothed them by promising that Gūnga should remain in heaven, and descend to earth also. This goddess, therefore was called Mūndakinee in heaven, Gūnga on earth, and Bhogūvūtēē in patalū.

All casts worship Gūnga, yet most of the ceremonies at the time of the daily ablutions, with the exception of some forms of praise to this goddess, are in the name of Shivū and other gods. The Hindoos particularly choose the banks of this river for their worship, as the merit of works performed here, according to the promise of the shastrūs^g,

^f The mouths of the Ganges.

^g ' He who thinks upon Gūnga, though he may be 800 miles distant from the river at the time, is delivered from all sīn, and is entitled to heaven.—At the hour of death, if a person think upon Gūnga, he will obtain a place in the heaven of Shivū.—If a person, according to the re-

becomes exceedingly augmented. In Voishakhū, Jyoisht'hū, Kartikū, and Maghū, the merit is greater than in other months; and at the full moon in these months is still more enhanced. In every month, on the first, sixth, and eleventh of the moon, and at its total wane also, bathing in Gūnga is much recommended.

On the third of the moon in Voishakhū, a few Hindoos perform the ceremonies of worship by the side of the river, under the expectation that the benefits will be undecayable: such is the promise of the smritee shastrū.

On the 10th of the moon's increase in Jyoisht'hū, in the forenoon, the Dūshūhūra festival is held, in commemoration of Gūnga's descent to the earth. Crowds of people assemble from the different towns and villages near the river, especially at the most sacred places of the river, bringing their offerings of fruit, rice, flowers, cloth, sweetmeats, &c. and hang garlands of flowers across the river, even where it is very wide. After the people have bathed, the officiating bramhūn ascends the banks of the river with them; and after repeating sūngkūlpū^h, places before him a jar of water, and sitting with his face to the

gulations of the shastru, he going to bathe in Gunga, and die on the road, he shall obtain the same benefits as though he had actually bathed.—There are 3,500,000 holy places belonging to Gūnga: the person who looks at Gunga, or bathes in this river, will obtain all the fruit which arises from visiting all these 3,500,000 holy places.—If a person who has been guilty of killing cows, bramhūns, his gooroo, or of drinking spirits, &c. touch the waters of Gūnga, desiring in his mind the remission of these sins, they will be forgiven.—By bathing in Gūnga, accompanied with prayer, a person will remove at once the sins of thousands of births.—*Gunga-Vakya-Vulee.*

^h An incantation, at the time of repeating which the person promises to attend to certain ceremonies.

north or east, performs what is called ghūtū-st'hapūnū¹. After this, the bramhūn performs other ceremonies, as asūnū shoodhee^k, ũngū-nyasū^l, kūrangū-nyasū^l, bhoot-shōōdhee^m, dig-vūndhūnūⁿ, bhōōt-otsārūnū^o, &c. then the worship of the five gods; of the nine planets; of the regents of the ten quarters, &c. To this succeeds meditation, manūsū^p, &c.; the priest next presents the offerings, which may be sixty-four, or eighteen, or sixteen, or ten, or five, or merely flowers and water, according to the person's ability. To these offerings, the worshipper must add sesamum, clarified butter, and barley-flour. The officiating bramhūn next performs the worship of Narayūnū, Mūhēshwūrū^q, Brūmha, Sōōryū, Bhūgēērūt'hū, and Himalūyū; then the worship of the inhabitants of the waters, as the fish, the tortoises, the frogs, the water-snakes, the leeches, the snails^r, the mūkūrū, the shell-fish, the porpoises, &c.

¹ The ceremonies performed at the setting up of an image. Here the jar of water is the image, before which the worship of any of the gods may be performed.

^k Purifying the seat. ^l Ceremonies accompanied with motions of the fingers. ^m Purifying the five elements of which the body is composed. ⁿ Binding the ten quarters, to prevent evil spirits from arriving to defile the worship. ^o Driving away the evil spirits. ^p Going over all the ceremonies in the mind. ^q Shivū.

^r This strongly reminds us of the lines of Juvenal, Satire xv.

‘ Who has not heard, where Egypt's realms are nam'd,
 What monster gods her frantic sons have fram'd?
 Here Ibis gorg'd with well-grown serpents*, there
 The crocodile† commands religious fear:
 Where Memnon's statue magic strings inspire
 With vocal sounds that emulate the lyre;
 And Thebes (such, Fate, are thy disastrous turns!)
 Now prostrate o'er her pompous ruins mourns;
 A monkey-god‡, prodigious to be told!
 Strikes the beholder's eye with burnished gold:

* See Guroora. † The Hindoos throw their children to the alligators. ‡ Hunooman.

The offerings, after having been presented to the inhabitants of the waters, are thrown into the Ganges. Ten lamps of clarified butter are then lighted up, and all the other offerings presented. After this, the names of certain gods are repeated, with forms of praise; the fee is presented to the priest, the bramhũns are entertained, and the offerings sent to the houses of bramhũns. At the close of these ceremonies the people perform obeisance to Gũnga, and then depart. Great multitudes assemble on the banks of the river on these occasions, and expect much both in this life and hereafter from this act of worship. If a person, placing on his head ten fruits of any kind, thus immerse himself in the Ganges on this day, the sins of ten births will be removed.

In this month also clay images of Gũnga are set up in domestic temples, and worshipped, and the next day thrown into the river. In some places clay images of this goddess are preserved in clay temples, and worshipped daily. Persons escaping dangers on water present offerings to Gũnga, as well as to Vũroonũ, the Indian Neptune; as mariners, having escaped the dangers of the sea, used to offer a sacrifice to Venus.

On the thirteenth of the decrease of the moon in

To godship here blue Triton's scaly herd,
 The river progeny is there prefer'd || :
 Through towns Diana's power neglected lies,
 Where to her dogs § aspiring temples rise :
 And should you leeks or onions eat, no time
 Would expiate the sacrilegious crime.
 Religious nations sure, and blest abodes,
 Where every orchard is o'errun with gods !'

|| See the account above.

§ See a preceding article.

Choitrū, the people descend into the water, and with their hands joined immerse themselves; after which the officiating bramhūn reads a portion of the shastrū, describing the benefits arising from this act of bathing. The people repeat after the priest certain significant words, as the day of the month, the name of Vishnoo, &c. and then immerse themselves again. Gifts of rice, fruits, and money are offered to the poor, the bramhūns, and the priest. On this occasion groups of ten or twelve persons stand in the water in one spot, for whom one bramhūn reads the formulas. These groups are to be seen extending themselves very far along the river. At the moment of the conjunction of the moon (on the thirteenth of its decrease) with the star Shū-tūbhisha, this festival is called the Great Varoonēē. The merit arising from bathing at this lucky moment is supposed to be very great; the people fast till the bathing is over. When there is a conjunction as above, and the day falls on a Saturday, the festival is called the Great, Great Varoonēē*.

The pooranūs declare, that the sight, the name, or the touch of Gūnga takes away all sin, however heinous; that thinking of Gūnga, when at a distance, is sufficient to remove the taint of sin; but that bathing in Gūnga has blessings in it of which no imagination can conceive.

So much is this river revered among the Hindoos, that many bramhūns will not cook upon it, nor throw saliva into it, nor wash themselves nor their clothes in it†. Some

* At the time of many of the festivals, the sides of the Ganges, in many places, are gaily illuminated; and lights fastened on boards, plantain stalks, &c. or put in earthen pots, are floated down the stream.

† In the work called Valmēēkee-moonee, amongst many other forms of praise to be offered to Gūnga, is the following:—‘O goddess, the owl that

persons perform a journey of five or six months to bathe in Gūnga, to perform the rites for deceased relations, and to carry this water to place in their houses, for religious and medicinal uses. The water of this river is used also in the English courts of justice to swear upon, as the koran is given to Mūsūlmans, and the New Testament to Christians; but many of the most respectable Hindoos refuse to comply with this method of making oath, alleging that their shastrūs forbid them in these cases to touch the water of the Ganges^u, the shalgramū, or a bramhūn. When such cases occur in the courts, the judges very candidly permit the person, if of good character, to give his evidence in a way consistent with his peculiar prejudices, as, after bathing, &c. and standing with his face to the east. The Hindoo courts formerly admitted a person's evidence without an oath; and when a cause could not be determined by evidence thus given, they resorted to the ordeal. It is not uncommon for one Hindoo to say to another, 'Will you make this engagement on the banks of Gūnga?' The other replies, 'I engage to do what I have said; but I cannot call Gunga to witness it.' If a person utter a most audacious lie, while near or upon the Ganges, the person to whom he is speaking says, 'Are you not afraid of uttering such a falsehood in the presence of Gunga?' A third person perhaps adds, as a continuation of the reproach—'Not he; he has been guilty of discharging his urine into Gūnga, even at Prūyagū.'

lodges in the hollow of a tree on thy banks is exalted beyond measure; while the emperor, whose palace is far from thee, though he may possess a million of stately elephants, and may have the wives of millions of conquered enemies to serve him, is nothing.'

^u Many persons refuse to contest causes in which large sums are at stake, under the fear that they may be constrained to make oath on the waters of the Ganges.

Morning and evening the Hindoos visit and look at this river to remove the sins of the night or of the day; when sick they smear their bodies with the sediment, and remain near the river for a month perhaps. Some of course recover, and others die: a Hindoo says, that those who have a steady faith and an unwavering mind, recover; the rest perish.

The Hindoos are extremely anxious to die in the sight of the Ganges, that their sins may be washed away in their last moments. A person in his last agonies is frequently dragged from his bed and friends, and carried, in the coldest or in the hottest weather, from whatever distance, to the river side; where he lies, if a poor man, without a covering day and night till he expires: with the pains of death upon him, he is placed up to the middle in the water, and drenched with it. Leaves of the toolusee plant are also put into his mouth; and his relations call upon him to repeat, and repeat for him, the names of Ramū, Hūree, Narayūnū, Brūmha, Gūnga, &c. In some cases the family priest repeats some incantations, and makes an offering to Voitūrūnēē, the river over which the soul, they say, is ferried after leaving the body. The relations of the dying man spread the sediment of the river on his forehead or breast, and afterwards with the finger write on this sediment the name of some deity. If a person should die in his house, and not by the river side, it is considered as a great misfortune, as he thereby loses the help of the goddess in his dying moments. If a person choose to die at home, his memory becomes infamous. The conduct of Raja Nūvū-krishnū of Nūdēēya, who died in his bed-room about the year 1800, is still mentioned as a subject of reproach, because he refused to be carried to the river before death. 'Ah! Ah!' say the superstitious, when a neighbour at the

point of death delays the fatal journey to the river, ' he will die like Raja Nüvü-Krishnü.'

Dead bodies are brought by their relations to be burnt near this river; and when they cannot bring the whole body, it is not uncommon for them to bring a single bone and cast it into the river^x, under the hope that it will help the soul of the deceased.

In the eastern parts of Bengal, married women, long disappointed in their hopes of children, make an offering to Gūnga, and enter into a vow, that if the goddess will give them two children, they will present one to her: and it is not uncommon for such women to cast the first child into the river as an offering; but it is said, that at present some relation or religious mendicant stands ready to preserve the life of the child. The mother cannot take it again, but this person adopts and provides for it. These offerings are made on the tenth of the moon in Jyoisht'hü, and on the 13th of Choitrü.

Some persons even drown themselves in the Ganges, not doubting but they shall immediately ascend to heaven.

^x Many persons, whose relations die at a distance from the Ganges, at the time of burning the body preserve a bone, and at some future time bring this bone and commit it to Gūnga, supposing that this will secure the salvation of the deceased. The work called Kriya-yogüsarü contains the following curious story:—A bramhün, who had been guilty of the greatest crimes, was devoured by wild beasts; his bones only remained. A crow took up one of these bones, and was carrying it over Gūnga, when another bird darting upon it, the crow let the bone fall. As soon as the bone touched Gūnga, the bramhün sprang to life, and was ascending to heaven, when the messenger of Yümü, the judge of the dead, seized him, as a great sinner. At this time Narayünti's messengers interfered, and pleaded, that the sins of this man, since one of his bones had touched

The shastrū encourages this^v. It is a sin for a bramhūn, but an act of merit in a shōōdrū or a dūndēē, if he be in worldly trouble, or afflicted with an incurable distemper. The Gūnga-Vakya-Vūlee says, 'Should any person have eaten with another who is degraded for seven successive births; or have committed the five sins, each of which is called mūha-patūkū; should he have eaten the food which has been touched by a woman in her courses; or have constantly spoken falsely; or have stolen gold, jewels, &c.; should he have killed the wife of his friend; or have injured bramhūns, or friends, or his mother, &c.; or have committed the sins which doom a man to the hell called Mūharourūvū; or have committed those sins for which the messengers of Yūmū constantly beat a person; or have committed multitudes of sins in childhood, youth, and old age;—if this person bathe in Gūnga at an auspicious period, all

Gūnga, were all done away. The appeal was made to Vishnoo, who decided in the bramhūn's favour. The bramhūn immediately went to heaven.

^v The Skūndū pooranū declares, that by dying in the Ganges, a person will obtain absorption into Brūmhū. The same work contains a promise from Shivū, that whoever dies in Gūnga shall obtain a place in his heaven.—The Bhūvishyū pooranū affirms, that if a worm, or an insect, or a grasshopper, or any tree growing by the side of Gūnga, die in the river, it will obtain absorption into Brūmhū.—The Brūmhū pooranū says, that whether a person renounce life in Gūnga, praying for any particular benefit, or die by accident, or whether he possess his senses or not, he will be happy. If he purposely renounce life, he will enjoy absorption, or the highest happiness; if he die by accident, he will still attain heaven.—Mūnoo says, 'A mansion with bones for its rafters and beams; with nerves and tendons for cords; with muscles and blood for mortar; with skin for its outward covering; filled with no sweet perfume, but loaded with fæces and urine; a mansion infested by age and by sorrow, the seat of malady, harassed with pains, haunted with the quality of darkness, and incapable of standing long; such a mansion of the vital soul let its occupier always cheerfully quit.'

these sins will be removed : he will also be admitted into the heaven of Brūmha, the Pūrūm-hūngsee ; be put in possession of the merits of the man who presents a lack of red cows to a bramhūn learned in the four védūs ; and afterwards will ascend and dwell at the right hand of Vishnoo. After he has enjoyed all this happiness, and shall be re-born on the earth, he will be possessed of every good quality, enjoy all kinds of happiness, be very honourable, &c. He who shall doubt any part of this, will be doomed to the hell called Koombhēē-pakū, and afterwards be born an ass. If a person, in the presence of Gūnga, on the anniversary of her arrival on the earth, and according to the rules prescribed in the shastrūs, present to the bramhūns whole villages, he will obtain the fruits that arise from all other offerings, from all sacrifices, from visiting all the holy places, &c. ; his body will be a million times more glorious than the sun ; he will obtain a million of virgins, and multitudes of carriages, palanqueens, &c. covered with jewels ; he will dwell for ages in heaven, enjoying its pleasures in company with his father ; as many particles of dust as are contained in the land thus given away to the bramhūns, for so many years will the giver dwell in happiness in Vishnoo's heaven.'

Every real Christian must be deeply affected on viewing the deplorable effects of this superstition. Except that part of the rig-védū which countenances the burning of women alive, no writers ever gave birth to a more extensive degree of misery than those who have made the Ganges a sacred river. Thousands, yea millions of people are annually drawn from their homes and peaceful labours, several times in the year, to visit different holy places of this river, at a great expense of time, and money spent in making offerings to the goddess ; expensive journeys are undertaken by vast

multitudes to obtain the water^z of this river, (some come two or three months' journey for this purpose,) or to carry the sick, the dying, the dead, or the bones of the dead, to its banks. What the sick and dying suffer by being exposed to all kinds of weather in the open air on the banks of the river, and in being choked by the *sacred* water in their last moments, is beyond expression. In short, no eyes, but those of Omniscience, can see all the foul deeds done upon and by the sides of this river; and the day of judgment alone can bring all these deeds to light. The bramhün will then see, that instead of Gūnga's having removed the sins of her worshippers, she has increased them a million-fold.



SECT. II.—*Other deified Rivers.*

THE Godavüree, the Nürmöda, the Kavérēē, the Atréyēē, the Kūrūtoya, the Bahooda, the Gomütēē, the Sūrūyoo, the Gündükēē, the Varahēē, the Chürmün-wütee, the Shütüdroo, the Vipasha, the Goutümēē, the Kürmünasha, the Shonū^a, the Oiravütēē, the Chündrübhaga, the Vitüsta, the Sindhoo, the Bhüdra-vükasha, the Pünüsa, the Dévika, the Tamrüpürnēē, the Toongübüdra, the Krishna, the Vétrüvütēē, the Bhoirüvü, the Brümhü-pootrü^b, the Voitürünēē, and many other rivers, are mentioned in the Hindoo shastrüs as sacred.

At the full moon in Asharhü, many thousand Hindoos assemble at Prütapü-gürü, a place to the west of Lucknow,

^z Many thousands perish by the dysentery, and others through want, in these journies.

^a This is a male river.

^b Ditto.

and bathe in the Godavūrēē, or in the remains of it, (for at this season of the year this river is nearly dried up.)

On the last day of Choitrū, a large assembly of Hindoos meet at Modūphūrū-poorū, about sixteen miles from Patna, where the Gūndakēē, the Sūrūyoo, and the Ganges meet^b. The assembly remains eight days, and a large fair is held on the spot, at which horses, camels, and other beasts, and also children, are bought and sold: the price of a boy is from ten to twelve roopees; that of a girl is less.

On the same day a large concourse of Hindoos, some say as many as 20,000, principally women, assemble at Ūyodhya, to bathe in the Sūrūyoo.

On the 14th of the decrease of the moon in Phalḡoonū, an equal number of people are said to meet on the banks of the Sūrūyoo at Būhūrūm-ghatū, near Lucknow: but they do not bathe in the river, the water of which is very filthy, but in a sacred pool adjoining.

On the banks of the Yūmoona, on the second of the moon in Kartikū, and on the eighth of the decrease of the moon in Bhadrū, vast crowds of Hindoos assemble in different places to bathe.

The Brūmhū-pootrū receives the same honours on the eighth of the increase of the moon in Choitrū. At a place

^b There are several causes why particular places of these rivers are esteemed peculiarly sacred. Some of these causes are given in the shastrūs, and others arise from tradition. One instance of the latter occurs respecting Voidyvatēē, a place near Serampore, where Nimaeē, a religious mendicant, performed his devotions, and where at present, at a conjunction of particular stars, multitudes assemble to bathe.

three days' journey from Dacca, 50 or 60,000 people assemble, and sacrifice pigeons, sheep, and goats, casting them into the river. Children are also cast into the river here by their mothers, but are generally rescued and carried home by strangers. Superstitious people say, that on this day the river gradually swells so as to fill its banks, and then gradually sinks to its usual level.

The Voitürünēē, in Orissa, is also placed among the sacred rivers, and on the thirteenth of the decrease of the moon in Choitrū, great multitudes of Hindoos, (six or seven hundred thousand,) assemble at Yajū-poorū, near the temple of Jūgūnnat'hū, and bathe in this river.

Many other rivers receive the same honours^c; and I could have greatly enlarged this account, in detailing their fabulous histories, and in noticing the superstitious ceremonies of this deluded people on their banks: but what I have here inserted, and the preceding account of Gunga, must suffice.

^c See Asiatic Researches.

CHAP. XIV.

THE WORSHIP OF FISH.

VISHNOO, having been incarnate in the form of a fish, is worshipped on certain occasions, or rather a form of praise is repeated in honour of this incarnation.

In the preceding account of Gūnga it will also be seen, that the finny tribes of that river are worshipped at the festivals in honour of this goddess.

I am informed, however, that female Hindoos, residing on the banks of the Pūdmū, on the 5th of the increase of the moon in Maghū, actually worship the Ilishū fish, when they first arrive in the river, with the usual ceremonies, and after that partake of them without the fear of injuring their health.

CHAP. XV.

THE WORSHIP OF BOOKS.

THE Hindoos have deified their shastrŭs, which, on different occasions, they worship with the same ceremonies as an idol, anointing the book with perfumes, and adorning it with garlands.

At the reading of any part of the védŭs, the Chŭndēē, and other works, the book to be read is always addressed as an idol. At such times the worshipper thus prays to the book: 'Oh! book! thou art the goddess of learning, bestow learning upon me.'

When an individual employs a bramhŭn to recite to his family and neighbours the Mŭhabharŭtŭ, Ramayŭnŭ, Shrēēbhagŭvŭtŭ, or any other pooranŭ, the worship of the work recited is performed on the first and last days at considerable length, many offerings being presented: each day's recital is also preceded by a short service paid to the book.

At the festival in honour of the goddess Sŭrŭswŭtēē any one of the shastrŭs is adopted and worshipped, joined with the pen and inkstand.

The followers of Vishnoo, and especially the mendicant voiragēēs, pay a still greater reverence than the regular Hindoos to the books they esteem sacred. These books relate to the amours of Krishnŭ, or to the mendicants Choitŭnyŭ and Nityanŭndŭ.

A book placed on a golden throne, and presented to a bramhŭn, is a very meritorious gift.

CHAP. XVI.

THE WORSHIP OF STONES.



The Shalgramū^a.

THIS is the ætites, or eagle-stone, of which there is a great variety, and to which many virtues were ascribed by the ancients. When I shewed a picture of the eagle-stone to a bramhūn who was sitting with me, without informing him what it was, he exclaimed—‘ This is the shalgramū !’ and added, (jocularly,) ‘ Oh ! then, Englishmen will be saved, as they have the shalgramū amongst them.’

This stone, black, hollow, and nearly round, is said to be brought from mount Gūndūkee, in Napaul. It is added, that in this mountain there are multitudes of insects which perforate the masses of stone, so that pieces fall into the river Gūndūkū in the shape of the shalgramū, from whence they are taken with nets. Common ones are about as large as a watch. They are valued according to their size, their hollowness, and the colours in the inside; and from these circumstances they are called by different names. The chief sorts are called Lūkshmēē-Narayūnū, Rūghoonat’hū,

^a From sharū and gramū, which indicates that this stone makes the place excellent in which it is preserved, as the Mūhabharūtū is said to purify the places in which it is read : hence bramhūns are forbidden to enter a village where the Mūhabharūtū is not found, as such place is pronounced unclean.

Lūkshmēē, Jūnardūnū, Vamūnū, Damodūrū^b, &c. These different shalgramūs are worshipped under their different names. The first is sometimes sold for as much as two thousand roopees. The Hindoos have a notion, that whoever keeps in his house this celebrated stone, and a shell called dūkshina-vūrtū^c, can never become poor; but that the very day in which any one parts with one of them, he will begin to sink into poverty. Almost every respectable bramhūn keeps a shalgramū, as do some shōōdrūs. The bramhūn who does not keep one is reproached by his neighbours.

The reason why this stone has been deified is thus given in the Shrēē-bhagūvūtū :—Vishnoo created the nine planets to preside over the fates of men. Shūnēē (Saturn) commenced his reign by proposing to Brūmha, that he should first come under his influence for twelve years. Brūmha referred him to Vishnoo, but this god, equally averse to be brought under the dreaded influence of this inauspicious planet, desired Saturn to call upon him the next day, and immediately assumed the form of a mountain. The next day Saturn was not able to find Vishnoo, but discovering that he had united himself to mount Gūndūkēē, he entered

^b The Hindoos say, that this last shalgramū requires large offerings of food to be presented to it; and that a bramhūn, who had begged one of them, and neglected to feed it sufficiently, was brought to ruin, this god having swept away nearly his whole family by death. Many stories of this kind are related of this stone. Though a single grain of rice was never known to be eaten by an image, yet the Hindoos firmly believe this and similar stories, against all the evidence of their senses for hundreds of years together. Gopalū, a learned bramhūn employed in the Serampore printing-office, declared that one of these stones had been placed in his house by a relation, who attributed his family misfortunes to its powers.

^c A shell, the convolutions of which turn to the right. Vishnoo is said to hold a shell of this kind in his hand.

the mountain in the form of a worm called vūjrū-kēētū^c. He continued thus to afflict the mountain-formed Vishnoo for twelve years, when Vishnoo assumed his proper shape, and commanded that the stones of this mountain should be worshipped, and should become proper representatives of himself; adding, that each should have twenty-one marks in it, similar to those on his body, and that its name should be shalgramū.

The worship of any of the gods may be performed before the shalgramū, and it is often adopted as the representative of some god. It claims no national festival, but is placed near the image worshipped, and first receives the devotions of the Hindoos. The shalgramū is also worshipped daily by the bramhūns, after morning ablutions: they first bathe or wash the stone, reading the formulas; and then offer flowers, white lead, incense, light, sweetmeats, and water, repeating incantations: the offerings, after remaining before it a short time, are eaten by the family. In the evening, incense, light, and sweetmeats are offered, preceding which a bell is rung, and a shell blown; and the whole is closed by the priest's prostrating himself before the stone.

During the month Voishakhū, bramhūns suspend a pan of water every day over the shalgramū, and, through a small hole at the bottom, let the water fall on it, to preserve it cool during this month, which is one of the hottest in the year. This water is caught in another pan placed beneath, and drank in the evening as holy water. When the country is in great want of rain, a bramhūn in some instances places the shalgramū in the burning sun, and sits down by it, repeating incantations. Burning the god in the sun is said to be a sure way of obtaining rain.

^c Literally, the thunder-bolt worm.

Some persons, when sick, employ a bramhūn to present single leaves of the toolūsee plant, sprinkled with red powder, to the shalgramū, repeating incantations. A hundred thousand leaves are sometimes presented. It is said, that the sick man gradually recovers as every additional leaf is offered. When a Hindoo is at the point of death, a bramhūn shews him the marks of the shalgramū, the sight of which is said to secure the soul a safe passage to Vishnoo's heaven.

In a work called Shalgramū-nirnūyū an account is given of the proper names of the different shalgramūs; the benefits arising from their worship; the kinds of shalgramūs proper to be kept by persons in a secular state, and also by the religious.

A separate room, or house, or a particular spot in the room where the family dwell, is assigned to this god. Some persons keep one, others ten, others a hundred, and some even as many as a thousand of these stones.

The shalgramū is rendered impure by the touch of a shoodrū^d, and in such cases must be purified by rubbing it over with cow-dung, cow's urine, milk, ghēē, and curds. If a small part of the shalgramū be broken off, the owner commits it to the river. The bramhūns sell these stones, but trafficking in images is dishonourable.

[The shalgramū is the only stone deriving its deity from itself: all other stones worshipped are made sacred by incantations. For an account of them, see a succeeding article relative to the Hindoo images.]

^d So are all other images that have been consecrated.

CHAP. XVII.

A LOG OF WOOD WORSHIPPED.

*The Pedal.*

THIS is a rough piece of wood, (termed dhénkee,) generally the trunk of a tree, balanced on a pivot, with a head something like a mallet; it is used to separate the rice from the husk, to pound brick-dust for buildings, &c. A person stands at the farthest end, and with his feet presses it down, which raises up the head; after which he lets it fall on the rice, or brick-ends. — One of these pedals is set up at almost every house in country places.

The origin of this worship is thus given:—A religious guide, being called upon to give the initiating incantation to one of his disciples, commanded him to repeat the word dhénkee, dhénkee. Narūdū, the god of the dhénkee, pleased with the disciple, visited him, riding on a pedal, and gave him as a blessing another incantation, by which he immediately became perfect, and ascended to heaven.

The pedal is worshipped at the time of marriage, of investiture with the poita, of giving the first rice to a child, and at any other particular time of rejoicing. The women are the worshippers. It is also worshipped in the month Voishakhū by all casts of females, not excepting the wives of the most learned bramhūns; who consecrate it by put-

ting red, white, or yellow paint, and also some rice, dōōrva grass, and oil on its head.

About twenty years ago, the raja of Nūlū-danga, Mū-héndrū-dévū-rayū, spent three hundred thousand roopees in a grand festival in honour of this log of wood. At the close of the festival, the raja took a firebrand, and set all the gilded scenery on fire, and thus finished this scene of expensive folly and wickedness.

END OF VOL. I.