

XXIX. *On the SRÁWACS or JAINS.* By Dr. BUCHANAN HAMILTON,
M.R.A.S.

Read December 2, 1826.

IN the districts of *Bihár* and *Patna* the *Jains* are called *Srâwacs*. The number of this sect settled there is not great, amounting only to three hundred and fifty families ; but they possess considerable wealth, having all engaged in trade, and many of them with success. They have, therefore, seventeen priests (*yatis*); fifteen of whom constantly reside at *Patna*, and two at *Bihár*. With the two latter I had several interviews, and they were abundantly communicative, the chief of them being a man of considerable learning. At *Patna* they declined all intercourse with me ; which, I am told, proceeded from their being very shallow, and afraid of exposing their ignorance. A *Saryuriya-Bráhma*n, of the sect of *Vishnu*, named *Góvinda*, was brought to me at *Patna*, as the only person there able and willing to give me information relative to the *Srâwacs*. He said that he had been employed to instruct some of the *Yatis* in the Sanscrit language, which gave him an opportunity of reading their books and knowing their customs. Finding the employment profitable, he was, I believe, a principal means of keeping the *Yatis* at a distance from me : he was, however, abundantly diligent in procuring information. In travelling through the district I had also an opportunity of conversing with a great many pilgrims, who had come from *Bundelkhund*, and were visiting the holy places at *Gaya*, &c. From these sources I collected some information respecting this sect, which I now offer, in addition to that which I have given in my account of *Mysore*.*

The circumstance by which I was most surprised was, that here the hereditary division into the four common tribes of *Bráhmans*, *Cshatriyas*, *Vaisyas*, and *Sudras*, is totally denied, although these names are considered among them as denoting distinctions of employment and rank. All the laity here are therefore called *Vaisyas*, because they all trade ; but they assured me

* Journey through Mysore, Canara, and Malabar, vol. iii. pp. 81-84 ; 410-142.

that in the west of India a great many of them are called *Sudras* because they cultivate the land or tend herds of cattle, while others are called *Cshatriyas* because they carry arms. They also assert, that a large proportion of the Rajputs in *Jayanagar*, *Bundéla*, *Mewár*, *Marwár*, *Khandhár*, *Lahaur*, *Bikanír*, *Jodhpur*, &c. are of their religion, and that the princes of the first mentioned place continued to be *Jains* until the time of *Pratáp*, the son of *Sewáe Jayasinha*, who became a worshipper of *Vishnu*, and received initiation from the Brahmans. None of the persons I met with in these districts had ever heard of any *Bráhmans* belonging to the *Jains*; except those who will be afterwards mentioned, as forming two kinds of priesthood, rather connected however with the sect than belonging to it. There is, therefore, great reason to suspect, that the proper doctrine of caste, or at least of four castes, similar to those which the orthodox Hindus suppose to have originally existed, is an innovation among the *Jains*, although in the south of India it seems now completely adopted in compliance with the prevailing opinions. In *Karnáta*, for instance, none will admit that they are *Sudras*, that rank being too low for voluntary assumption; while it is evident that no people could have subsisted without by far the greater part being labourers; and it is no less evident that *Karnáta* was once inhabited by a people chiefly, if not entirely, of the *Jain* religion. Although the distinction of *Bráhman*, *Cshatriya*, *Vaisya*, and *Sudra*, has not taken place among the *Jains* of these districts nor of *Bundéla*, yet they are subdivided into tribes, which they call *Játí* or castes, and no person of one tribe can marry into another, nor will they eat boiled rice or bread together. These tribes are said to be numerous, and although I met with no person who pretended to know the whole which may exist in India, I heard the following mentioned: *Pariwal*, *Puriwal*, *Puliwal*, *Kariwal*, *Agarwal*, *Yasawal*, *Srimal*, *Srisrimal*, *Karawal*, *Barawal*, *Golsingha*, *Gujjawal*, *Bagherwal*, and *Golilal*. All the pilgrims from *Bundéla* were of the *Pariwal* tribe, but in these districts most of the residents are *Osawal* and *Agarwal*, that is, the original inhabitants of *Agra*. It must, however, be observed, that by far the greater part of the *Agarwals* have been converted to the sect of *Vishnu*, and are admitted to be of the *Vaisya* caste, which distinction is also conceded to those who adhere to the sect of the *Jainas*.

The *Jains* seem long to have been divided into two sects, the *Swétámbar* and *Digambar*: but of late, as among the orthodox, schisms have arisen, and several people have pretended to find new ways to heaven, by what are

called the *Terepant'hi* and *Bispan'thi* (that is, the thirteen and the twenty roads); while others, called *Duriyas*, have separated still farther from former opinions.

The *Digambaras* are also called *Bhat'tárakas*. Of these there are scarcely any in this district, nor were there any among the pilgrims with whom I conversed. I believe, however, that in the south the *Digambaras* are the most prevalent. The *Digambaras*, or at least their priests, ought to go naked; but if those I saw in the south belonged to this sect, as I believe was the case, they have given up this absurdity: and even *Pandita Achárya*, who had obtained *nirván*, or divinity, was as decently clothed as an ordinary man. What convinces me that it was the *Digambara* I met with in the south is, that this sect has twenty-four books called *Puránas*, as mentioned in my account of *Mysore*. The names of these books are: *Adi P.* or *Chakradhar P.*, *Ajil P.*, *Sambhar P.*, *Abhinandan P.*, *Saumati P.*, *Padma Prabhava P.*, *Sauparsa P.*, *Chandra Prabhava P.*, *Saubodhinathiya P.*, *Saitalnathiya P.*, *Sriyanganathiya P.*, *Vasupujya P.*, *Bimalnathiya P.*, *Ananta-nathiya P.*, *Dharma nathiya P.*, *Santinathiya P.*, *Kunthunathiya P.*, *Armallanathiya P.*, *Munisabratanathiya P.*, *Naminathiya P.*, *Nemnanathiya P.*, *Parsanathiya P.*, *Mahavira P.* and *Uttara P.* These books, so far as I can learn, give an account of the twenty-four *Tirt'hancararas*, or lawgivers of the sect; the first twenty-three giving each an account of one such person, while the *Uttara Purána* gives an account of the whole.

The sect of *Digambara*, in performing its ceremonies, is said to be guided by books called *Siddhánta*, which form its code of *agam* (rituals). The books are *Trailókyasára*, *Gómatasára*, *Pungjaraj*, *Trailókyadipak*, *Kshipanasára*, *Siddhántasára*, *Tribhangísára*, and *Shatpawar*.

Many of these *Puránas* and *Siddhántas* are attributed to GAUTAMA, or other chief rulers (*Gañadhar*) of the sect, who are supposed to relate what was said by the *Tirt'hancararas* or law-givers.

Besides these books, the *Digambaras* have other books, called *Charitras*, composed by inferior personages. These are *Yasódhar C.*, *Srípal C.*, *Hanumant C.*, *Stítá C.*, *Bhadrubahú C.*, *Jambuswámi C.*, and *Pradyumna C.*

The *Swétambaras* have always held the gymnosophistic *Digambaras* in the contempt due to their extravagance.

So far as is here known, the *Digambaras* are divided into eighty-four *gachha*, each of which is under the authority, in spirituals, of a priest, called *Srí-pújya*; but every person seems to be at liberty to join whatever

gachha he chooses. The *Srī-pūjya* is the *Guru*, or spiritual guide, of the *gachha*, and as such (as is usual among Hindus of all sects) is worshipped by his followers; but whether or not he is exactly of the same rank with *Pandita Achārya*, whom I have mentioned in my account of *Mysore*, I cannot ascertain. The *Srī-pūjya* is generally by birth a *Srāvaca*, and renounces all worldly pleasures: he educates a number of pupils in the same strict practice, and is succeeded by one of them when he is translated to heaven. None of the *Srī-pūjyas* who resort to *Bihār* appear to reside farther east than *Gwalior*. Each of them seems to have an abode which may be considered as his head-quarters; but they pass a great part of their time in visiting their own flocks. Although it is for these alone that they perform the offices of delivering initiatory instruction (*Upades*), of distributing consecrated ashes, and of reading the book called *Pritikrama*, yet wherever they go they are received by the whole sect with the utmost respect; and in all the principal places which they frequent, houses called *pausal* have been built for their accommodation. The *Srī-pūjyas* and their immediate pupils, I understand, in general possess some learning. The people of each *gachha* are so scattered, that the *Srī-pūjyas* have found it necessary to appoint assistants, who act as deputies to perform the above-mentioned ceremonies, and to manage the temporal concerns of the *Srī-pūjya*. These assistants are the only persons who in these districts are called *Yatis*, although it would appear from Colonel Mackenzie's account* that in the south the term is considered applicable to the whole priesthood. The *Yatis* are of the order of *Mahāvratā*, described in the Asiatic Researches by Colonel Mackenzie, and ought to observe with the utmost strictness the five great virtues of the *Jain* law: 1, respect for the life of all creatures; 2, truth; 3, honesty; 4, chastity; 5, poverty: but this last is binding only while they have no expectation of being elevated to the high dignity of *Srī-pūjya*. On this account it seems to be difficult to find persons willing to fill the office, so that children are usually purchased for the purpose, and among these the *Srāvacs* are willing to take the children of *Brāhmans*. The two *Yatis* at *Bihār* had originally been of this order, and being still suspected of a hankering after the opinions of their youth, were far from being respected, although one of them, as I have said, was a man of very considerable learning and good manners, qualifications which, I am told, are

* As. Res., vol. vii. pp. 244-286.

very uncommon in this order of priesthood. These *Yatis* are the mere agents of the *Srí-pújyas*, and according to their industry in performing their duty, and especially in remitting contributions to the sage on whom they depend, are entrusted with the care of a larger or smaller portion of his flock, being removeable at his pleasure from one place to another. The *Yatis* usually reside at one of the places (*pausal*) built for their master's accommodation, and each has usually a pupil whom he educates to be his successor. If he die without having educated a successor, the *Srí-pújya* is his heir, and sends a new *Yati* to take charge of the office. In general the *Yatis* can read Sanscrit, but few of them understand much of that language.

Some holy men, called *Sanbégis*, make occasional visits to these districts : they accept of nothing but what is absolutely necessary for each day's subsistence, and are supposed literally to take no heed for to-morrow.

The *Sráwacs* of the *Swétámbara* sect appear to have no proper *Puróhīts*, or priests, for conducting their ceremonies, as each man worships the gods for himself and presents his own offerings ; nor on such occasions is any priest necessary to read prayers. Among them, however, has arisen an order of *Bráhmans* called *Bhójaks* (eating), or *Pushpakar* (flower priests), who attend at their temples and take the offerings, and on that account are usually called their *Puróhīts*, although they are never employed to read prayers. The account usually given is, that between two or three centuries ago, the sect having undergone persecution, these *Bráhmans* took arms in their defence, and have ever since been allowed to have charge of the temples, to receive the offerings, and to supply those who come to worship, with turmeric, red-lead, and some other articles usually employed. All the *Bhójaks* that I have seen adhered to the orthodox faith ; and the same may be said of the garland-makers (*Máli*), of whom one is usually attached to each temple, to keep it clean and supply votaries with flowers. The *Sráwacs* of the *Swétámbara* sect seem, indeed, to have little occasion for *Puróhīts* ; as of what are called the ten acts (*Daśa-karma*) requiring the assistance of priests among the orthodox, marriage alone is here accompanied by a religious ceremony ; and any *Bráhman* is employed to read the ceremony usual on such occasions. The reason of this seems to be, that, the ceremony being universal among their neighbours, the *Sráwacs* are afraid, lest without it the contract might not be considered valid. In the south it appears, from Colonel Mackenzie's account, that the *Jains* attend to the performance of

all these ten religious acts (*Daś'a-karma*), and also to the ceremony of initiation, which the *Srāvacs* here entirely neglect. All the *Srāvacs* ought to be *Anuvratas*, which order requires their observing the five great virtues lately mentioned, as far at least as is consistent with the existence of society; for what I have called chastity is a total abstinence from sexual intercourse; and poverty implies the total neglect of worldly concerns; and these rules, observed with rigour, are evidently incompatible with the existence of society.

The *Srāvacs* worship their twenty-four great teachers, usually here called *Avatárs*, although *Tír'hancara* seems to be the more proper name; and also some of their most celebrated disciples, among whom eleven attendants on MAHÁVIRA are the most conspicuous. Of these GAUTAMA is by far the most eminent, and seems to be as remarkable here as GOMET-RAI is in the south.

Mr. Colebrooke, in his treatise on the *Jains*, published in the *Asiatic Researches*,* says that this person is called GAUTAMA on account of his being descended from that race, and such may be the case. The *Yati* at *Bihár*, and *Góvinda* of *Patna*, assured me, however, that they consider the disciple of MAHÁVIRA as the son of MÁYÁDÉVI, and as the author of the Indian metaphysics; nor in the pedigree of GAUTAMA or SÁKYA that is given in the *Srí-Bhágawat*, although it ascends for one hundred and sixteen generations to MARÍCHI, created by BRAHMÁ, can I discover any other person named GAUTAMA.

In their temples the *Swétámbaras* have images of all these persons, which they worship; but their devotions are more usually addressed to what are called the representations of their feet.

The places where all these personages were begotten (*Garbha*), where they were born (*Janma*), where they resigned worldly pleasures (*Dicshyá*), where they began to meditate (*Jnyána*), and where they departed from this world (*Nirvána*) are considered holy, and are frequented by pilgrims. Many such *Tír'thas* are found in these districts. All the twenty-four *Tír'hancaras* are said to have been sons of kings, except NÉMA-NÁT'H, and he was of the royal family of the Moon, being descended from YADU, the ancestor of CRÍSHNA; VÁSUPÚJYA, another of these *Tír'hancaras*, died at *Champánagar*, in the reign of Rájá DADHIBÁHAN, who lived after KÁMA. These circum-

* *As. Res.*, vol. ix. p. 303.

stances connected with the reforms of the *Pauranic* chronology, given by Major Wilford and Mr. Bentley, will serve in some measure to show what reductions will be necessary of the extravagance of *Jain* chronology. The *Yati* of *Bihár* says, that the best account of their *Avatárs* and kings is to be found in a book called the *Bhagawat sūtra*, consisting of 45,000 couplets (*slóka*); and that the best account of their places of pilgrimage is called the *Tára Tambul*. Much historical matter is said also to be contained in their *Puránas*, which are totally different from the books of the orthodox *Hindus* that are called by that name (although both have probably been derived from some common original, now lost). I was assured by GÓVINDA, that the *Sráwacs* here frequently study the same *Puránas* with the orthodox *Hindus*. The *Swétámbaras* also acknowledge the laws (*smṛiti*) of the twenty *munis* of the orthodox, and place these sages in the same order of succession. The *Swétámbaras* have no less than forty-five, or as some allege, eighty-four *Siddhantas* or *Agáms* for the direction of their worship; but they seem to contain much extraneous matter. Among these are the *Thanangi sūtra*, the *Gyánanti sūtra*, the *Sugorangi sūtra*, the *Upasakadésa*, the *Mahápandanna*, the *Nandi sūtra*, the *Pandanna*, the *Rayapséni*, the *Jirábhigam*, the *Jambudwípa-pannatti*, the *Sura-pannatti*, the *Chandraságar-pannatti*, the *Kalpasūtra*, the *Kátantra-vibhrama-sūtra*, the *Shah'thi-sutra*, and the *Sangrahani-sutra*.

The temples of the *Sráwacs* are here called *Déöhara*. In many of them *Bhairava* is an object of worship. The *Sráwacs* look on him as a minister of the gods, and he is represented by a mass of clay usually placed under a shed. The *Sráwacs* worship no less than forty-eight female deities, among whom are PADMÁVATI, CHAKRÉS'WARI, CHANDRAKANT'HÁ, SRÍ MALINÁ, &c.; but I have learned nothing of their history, nor did I see any of their images. The *Sráwacs* also worship KSHÉTRAPÁL, the god of cities, in the same way as the *Gráma-dévatás* are worshipped by the vulgar *Hindus*. In this district the *Sráwacs* do not usually worship any of the gods (*Dévatás*) adored by ordinary *Hindus*, such as RÁMA, CRÍSH'NA, SIVA, KÁLI, &c., but when afraid of any great impending evil, and they think that they have failed in procuring relief from their own gods, they sometimes, like the Moslems, have recourse to whatever idol may be fashionable, and employ a *Bráhman* to perform the ceremonies. They admit the sun and heavenly bodies to be deities, but do not consider them to be proper objects of worship.

The *Sráwacs* do not themselves perform *Hóma*: that is, they do not make burnt offerings; for they abhor animal sacrifices, and put themselves to the

most extreme inconvenience to avoid killing, by any accident, even the most minute reptile ; but when afraid of any misfortune, they employ a *Bráhma*n to make that offering. This seems, however, to be a superstition that has been introduced among them from their neighbours, like the worship of the gods of the orthodox *Hindus*.

Besides the *Digambar* and *Swétámbar*, as I have already mentioned, three sects, called *Térépant'hi*, *Bispan't'hi*, and *Duriya*, seem to have lately arisen among the *Jains* ; a proof that they are now freed from the terrors of persecution.

The *Térépant'his* and *Bispan't'his* are so few in number, that I have not been able to learn the differences of opinion on account of which they have separated from each other ; but both agree in rejecting the advice of the sages (*Gurus*) who are spiritual guides for the two old sects of the *Jains*; nor have they adopted any other persons to perform this important office. This is a heresy so damnable, that they are beheld with the abhorrence due to the heterodox (*Nástik*) ; while the *Swétámbaras* in the west of India, and even in *Patna*, from their weight in the state, are at present admitted by the *Brahmans* to be orthodox (*Astik*). These two heterodox sects worship the twenty-four *Avatárs* or *Tírt'hancaras*, and perform the other religious rites usual among the *Srāvacs* : practices which are entirely condemned by the people called *Duriyas*, all of whom are said to consider themselves as having obtained divinity, and therefore as exempted from the worship of any god. This extravagance, however, has not been accompanied by the system of rejecting the advice of sages (*Gurus*) ; and therefore, although considered as heterodox (*Nástik*), they are thought less dangerous than the other two schisms ; especially as their sages are ascetics of the most extravagant degree of mortification, who wander about thoughtless of all worldly concerns, covered with rags and nastiness. These fanatics have not yet penetrated so far toward the east as *Patna*, and the account above given is taken entirely from report.