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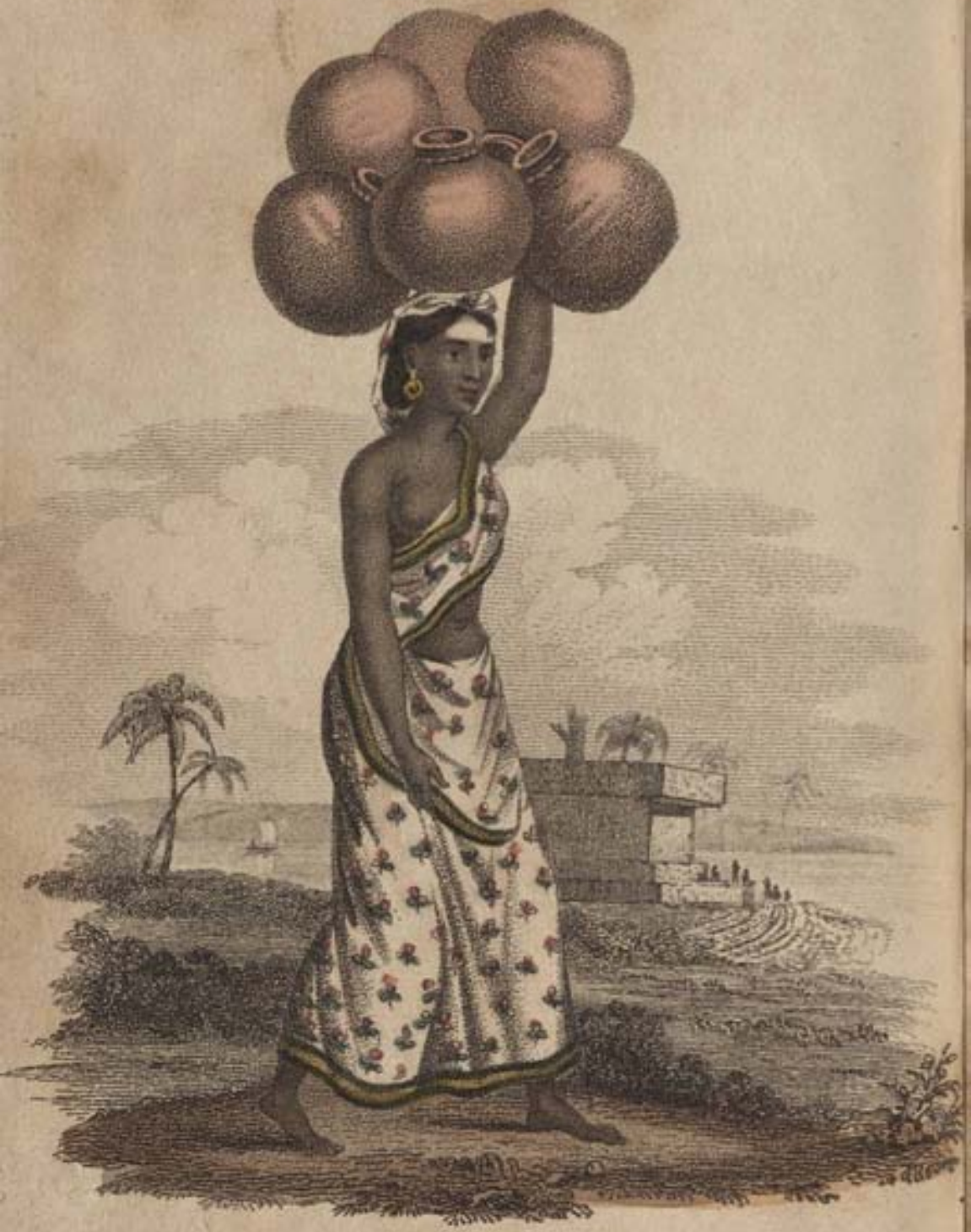


POTTER'S WIFE.

Pub.d by R. Ackermann, London, 1822.

THE WORLD

IN MINIATURE;

EDITED BY

FREDERIC SHOBERL.

Hindoostan,

CONTAINING

A DESCRIPTION OF THE RELIGION, MANNERS, CUSTOMS, TRADES, ARTS, SCIENCES, LITERATURE, DIVERSIONS, &c.

OF

The Hindoos.

ILLUSTRATED

With Upwards of One Hundred Coloured Engravings.

IN SIX VOLUMES.

VOL. V.

The proper study of mankind is man.—Pope.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR R. ACKERMANN, REPOSITORY OF ARTS, STRAND;
And to be had of all Booksellers.

HINDOOSTAN

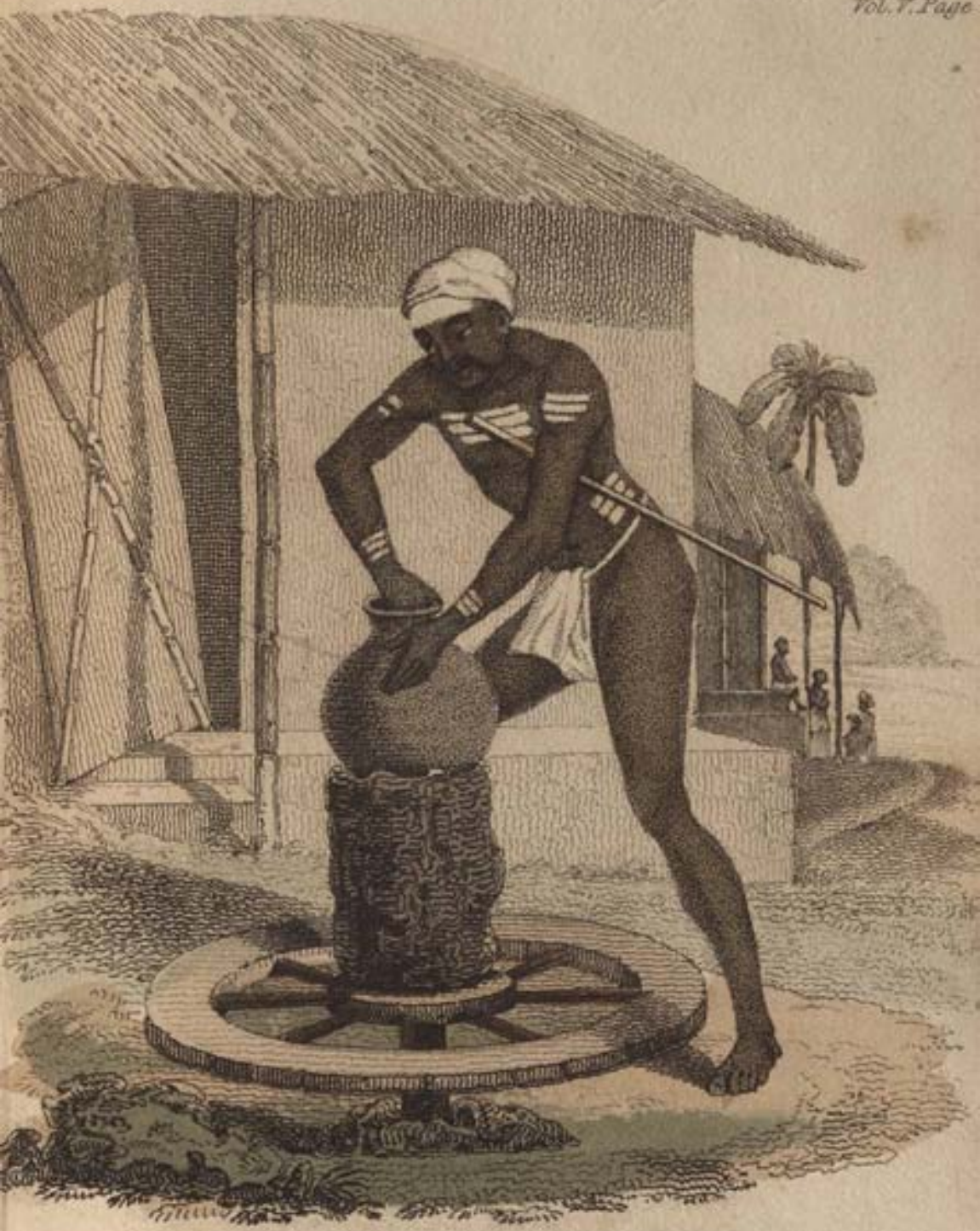
En Miniature.

THE POTTER.

THE potters form a distinct caste, not comprehended in either of the divisions called *right hand* and *left hand*. They are all of the sect of Sheeva. It is to these people that the Hindoos apply in case of fractures; but as they are wholly ignorant of anatomy, they employ nothing but simples and soils,

which indeed frequently abate the pain felt by the patient.

In their own business they use a very simple machine for fashioning the paste of which their wares are made; it is a horizontal wheel raised a little above the ground and turning on a pivot, as represented in the annexed plate. The workman, having placed a handful of clay on the centre of the platform, turns the wheel swiftly round with a stick, the end of which he introduces into a hole made for the purpose in one of the felloes. While the wheel is turning, he needs but put his hand into the midst of the paste, in order to mould it into a vessel of what shape soever he pleases. Our European potters



POTTER.

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follow a similar process, excepting that their wheel is set in motion by machinery.

The vessels, when turned, are done over with varnish, and baked in an oven: but some sorts are merely dried in the sun. Those which are used for cooling water are not varnished; it is necessary that for this purpose the pores should be left open, so that evaporation may take place through the sides of the vessel.

The potters make the earthen-ware horses which are met with in the fields and are considered by the Hindoos as the tutelary deities of their lands.

There have been instances of potters elevating themselves to the dignity of

rajahs, but yet without rising above their caste. Such was the origin of the family reigning in Mysore, previously to the usurpation of Hyder Aly. "This state," says a French missionary in 1760, "is much more extensive than it formerly was, and is daily encreasing through the ambition of the ministers of its kings, if, however, they deserve that title. By the Moguls, at least, on whom they, as well as almost all the other princes of India, are dependent, they are not regarded as such; they are not of the caste of the rajahs, but of that of the potters."

THE POTTER'S WIFE.

The vessels made by the potters are extremely thin: and some idea may be formed of their lightness by the ease with which the women carry a number of them on their heads, as shown in the frontispiece, which represents the wife of a potter carrying six earthen bottles, fastened together with a cord tied round the neck of each.

There is a great consumption of earthen-ware in Hindoostan. It is often the case that the vessel in which rice is boiled is used but once; and one of any kind than has been touched by a

profane person is instantly destroyed: the Hindoo would deem himself polluted by continuing to use it.

The potter makes also tiles and bricks, and various ornaments for the pagodas and the houses of the wealthy Hindoos. These ornaments consist of relievos and figures, always extravagant and frequently obscene.

THE FARRIER.

The farrier, like all the artisans who use the hammer, belongs to the caste of the smiths. Persons of this profession may not intermarry with any families but those of their own caste, such as goldsmiths, blacksmiths, carpenters and copper-smiths.

The farrier has scarcely any tools but his hammer and a small anvil. The horse-shoes which he makes are of very good quality, the iron of India being extremely malleable. The blacksmith in the next plate will afford some

idea of the posture in which the farrier works.

In some parts of Hindoostan, and on the coast of Malabar, iron is wrought without fire: they communicate to it by beating the degree of heat requisite for rendering it malleable.

HORSE-BREAKER.

SMITH.

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THE BLACKSMITH.

All the workmen who use the hammer, are called *camalas:* they belong to the second tribe of the right hand, and all consider one another as kinsmen.

The smith always carries his tools, forge and furnace along with him: he works wherever he can obtain a job. When a person needs his service, were it only to make a nail, he must agree with him beforehand, as to the time and place where the work is to be done. It frequently happens that the workman does not come till long after the

appointed day, because he has been obliged to take a journey, or to wait for the building of his house, or till his wife was brought to bed.

The employer has to provide iron, charcoal and anvil: the first two articles are to be had at the market: but a large stone serves for an anvil, near which the forge is set up. When every thing is ready, the workman arrives, bringing a pair of bellows on his shoulders, and two pair of tongs and a hammer or two in his hand. He begins with purifying the iron to render it malleable; and in a short time, he will produce a piece of work as nicely finished as if it had been made by a European. If he has to make shoes for a horse he goes him-

self to the stable and performs the office of farrier.

The smith soon constructs his furnace with mortar and earth. A boy blows the fire with a couple of skins, in the manner represented in the engraving: and with no other apparatus the smith makes sabre blades of the highest temper, daggers, lances and other instruments.

This artisan works a whole day, squatted in the manner exhibited in the plate, for a *fanam* and a half, or between seven and eight pence of our money.

On the same plate is seen a man whose business it is to break horses.

The Moors, or rather Moguls, are most expert at this business: but all

their art consists in teaching a horse to gallop at command, or to stop short while galloping. This mode of proceeding strains the hocks very much: but it is, nevertheless, adopted by all the Mahometans, who never trot their horses.

To break horses, the Hindoos employ a kind of whip made of bullocks' sinews and a bridle with a very strong bit.

When the horse is in the stable, or picketed, each of his legs is tied by a cord just above the hoof, which obliges him to stretch himself, and to remain in the same position. The horses of Hindoostan, in general, are very liable to contract bad habits, of which

it is afterwards extremely difficult to break them. They are useful animals, being mostly of the Persian breed. Some are brought from Manilla: these are small, but highly esteemed. The best come from Arabia, Tartary, Pegu, and Akin. The latter are of a peculiar breed, unknown in Europe. They are small, but strong and indefatigable; and have a short chest, thickly covered with fine hair. They are not adapted for war or for galloping; but they amble with such spirit and celerity, as ultimately to beat horses of every other kind. They fetch a high price; for which reason the king of Akin prohibits the exportation of mares, lest the breed should be propagated elsewhere to his

detriment. On the coast of Coromandel, a horse of pure blood, without defect, is never sold for less than one hundred and fifty pagodas, or above sixty pounds sterling.

The principal disease incident to the Indian horses, is the gripes, which is occasioned by their going into the water when hot: unless prompt assistance be administered they rarely recover. They are also liable to blindness, which is caused by a worm that insinuates itself into the eye.

GOLD-BEATER.

THE GOLD-BEATER.

The gold-beater belongs to the same caste as the gilder. The hammer and a stone block are his only implements. These men are accustomed to work, sitting like all the other Hindoos, as represented in the engraving; and use their feet as well as their hands.

The sand of the small rivers and streams contains particles of native gold, which the people take great pains to separate, by sifting. The residue is again purified and the gold dust

extracted from it. This occupation produces to those engaged in it, five or six fanams, from three shillings to three shillings and sixpence a-day.

GOLDSMITH.

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THE GOLDSMITH.

The goldsmiths belong to the same caste as the carpenters, and they, as well as the jewellers, carry their work-shops along with them. They work in the bazars, in the streets, and in the houses of their employers. Their tools are a small anvil, a pair of tongs, a hammer, and a few files. They melt the metal in a crucible, surrounded with burning charcoal, which they blow with a small iron blow-pipe, as represented in the engraving. The crucibles they make themselves, of clay, powdered charcoal, and cow-dung. Cru-

cibles formed of this mixture are very strong, and not liable to fly.

It is by these people that the ordinary jewels worn by the Hindoos are made. The supply of these ornaments forms a very considerable branch of trade, for the chief luxury of Hindoostan consists in jewelry: both men and women wear round their necks three or four chains which fall gracefully down the bosom. All have their ears perforated, and adorned with pendants, or large gold rings: besides which, they wear bracelets weighing six or eight ounces; and lastly, there is not a finger or toe, but is encircled with a ring. Hence the loss of the precious metals sustained annually in

Hindoostan, from friction alone, is estimated at many hundred thousands of pounds.

The goldsmiths also make articles in the European fashion, such as buckles, spoons and plate; but it is necessary to furnish them with models. They likewise make very beautiful necklaces of crystal, agate, and other stones.

Their works bespeak the want of suitable implements. They have not yet found means to give to gold and silver a polish equal to ours; but their filigree-work is much admired.

By patient industry they will produce with their wretched tools perfect imitations of European workmanship.

M. Chevalier, the French governor of Chandernagore, had received from Paris a piece of plate which was a master-piece of art. On showing it to one of his friends, the latter offered to lay him a wager, that the Hindoo goldsmiths would produce so exact an imitation, that the copy should not be known from the original. The challenge was accepted. The vase was sent to a goldsmith at Pondichery, who required three months to make one like it. At the expiration of that time, the workman sent back the model and the copy, between which, in the opinion of competent judges, there was no difference whatever. The governor himself was

obliged to acknowledge that he had lost his wager, for he mistook the work of the Hindoo for his own vase.

The wages of a goldsmith and his apprentice are about eight pence a day.

THE GILDER.

Under the appellation of *mutcheers* are comprehended all the painters and gilders; they are of the sect of Vishnu. Though Telingas, they are despised by the other castes, who consider them as Parias, because in their work they handle leather. They, nevertheless, eat nothing that has had life. This caste has a custom peculiar to itself, which is, that among its members the brother marries his sister and the uncle his niece.

The persons belonging to this caste are much whiter than the other Hindoos.

GILDER.

Pub.d by R. Ackermann, London, 1812.

The engraving represents one of these men gilding a frame. For this purpose they employ the same tools and processes as our European gilders.

THE BRAZIER.

The Hindoo braziers make all kinds of copper utensils, especially basins and spherical vessels, in which the rich Malabars keep their water for drinking. These vessels exactly resemble in shape the earthen bottles represented in the plates of the potter and his wife.

The braziers, like all the other Hindoo artisans, carry their whole workshop about with them. Their tools are a pair of tongs and a hammer. See the engraving.

Copper is employed for the orna-

BRAZIER.

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ments of pagodas and for the statues of the gods. The Hindoo devotees prefer copper to silver utensils for sacrifices and even for domestic use. The crucibles are made of clay, mixed with goats' hair or sheep's wool: to these materials oil of mustard-seed is added for the moulds.

Very few kitchen utensils are made of copper: they are mostly of brass. With the latter metal are also made the vessels in which the Hindoos fetch and keep water.

THE BRAZIER'S WIFE.

The Malabar women, after they have made *curry* and fetched water, which are their chief occupations, assist their husbands in filing and giving their work the requisite polish. (See the annexed plate.) They frequently make use of their feet to hold fast the stone upon which they work.

BRAZIER'S WIFE.

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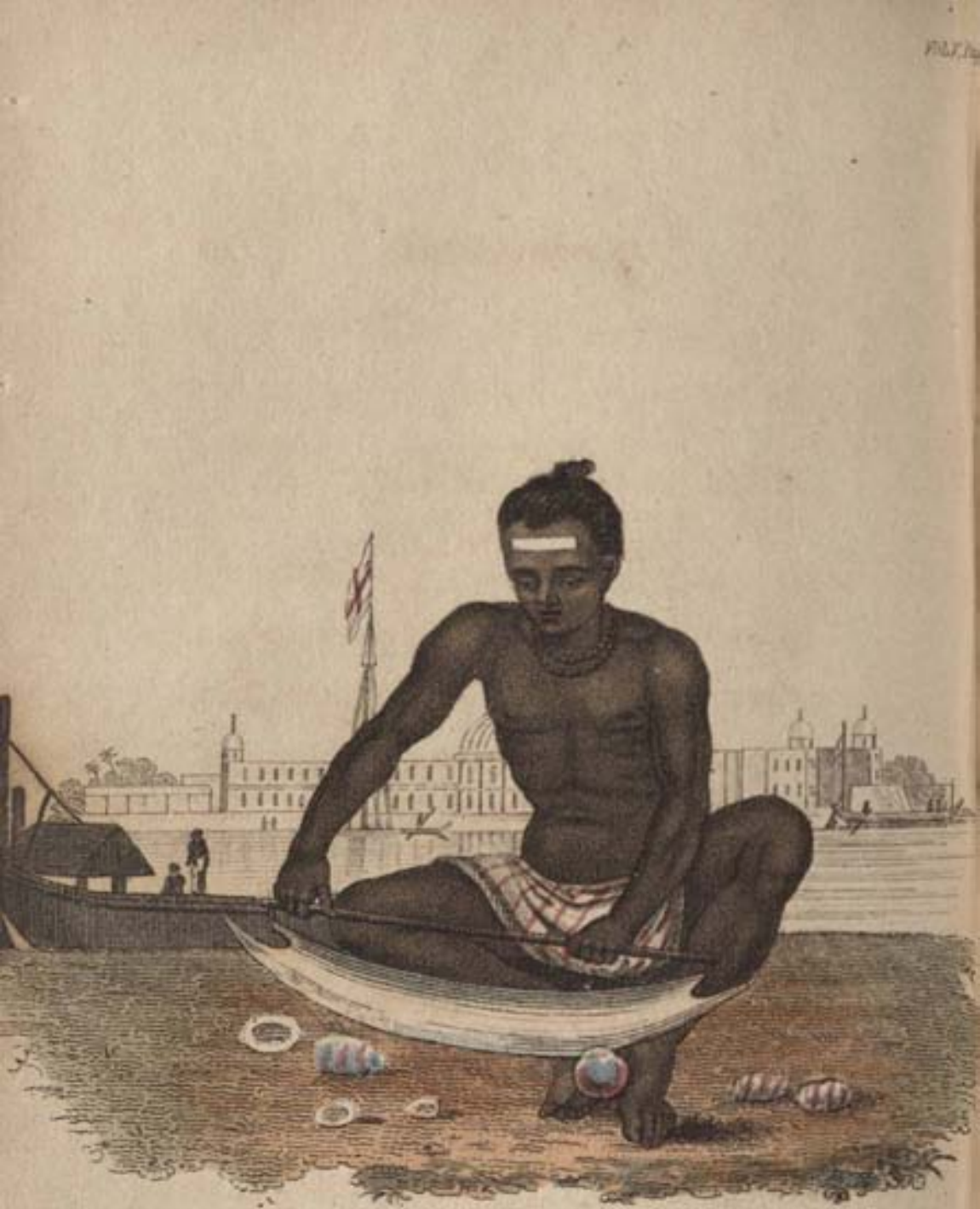

SHELL-CUTTER.

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SELLERS OF BRACELETS AND SHELL-WORKERS.

The sellers of bracelets, *caravers*, or *valayacarins*, belong to the second tribe of the left hand: they are Telingas.

We have already had occasion to allude to the extraordinary fondness of the Hindoo women for jewels; and in the third volume of this work opposite to page 248 we have given a plate, representing the various forms of these ornaments, and the manner in which they are adapted to the different parts of the body.

No Hindoo female, unless she were

in mourning, would show herself without her wrists and arms covered with bracelets.

In some castes the bracelets are of plate iron, copper or silver: but those made of the *sunk*, a species of large shell, which, as we have seen, is also used as a musical instrument, are preferred by such Hindoo women as make a point of strictly following the precepts of their religion. A great trade is carried on with them, though they fetch a high price. The poor have bracelets of glass or other beads, which are sold at a cheap rate.

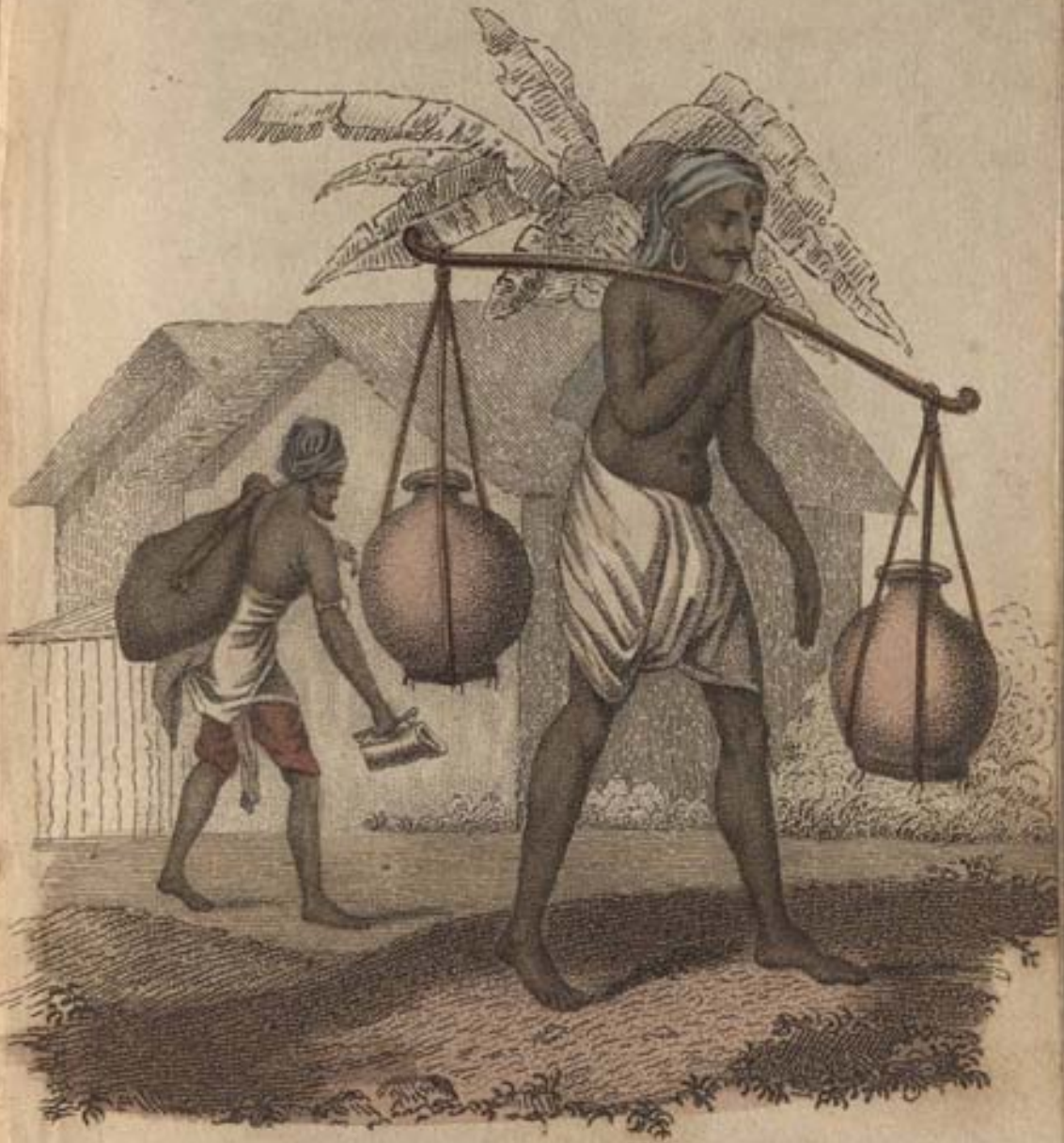
It requires considerable practice and address to saw the shells of which bracelets are made. The workman, as repre-

sented in the engraving, holds the shell between his feet, and cuts it with a saw resembling that used for sawing marble. It is a tedious and fatiguing operation. When the shells are cut, they are rubbed on a hard stone with water and sand, to give them the requisite shape. The rings are then adjusted to one another, and coated with gum-lack or red wax, which serves to conceal the junctures.

WATER-CARRIERS.

The Hindoos employed to carry water for Europeans have two earthen bottles slung by cords to the two ends of a bamboo, in the manner represented in the plate. The water which they themselves require for bathing must be brought to them by persons of their own caste.

The eastern mode of bathing differs from the European in this point, that the Hindoos do not go into the water: they squat down and the water is thrown over their bodies, which they sometimes rub with green peas. This last opera-



WATER CARRIERS.

Pub.d by R. Ackermann, London, 1822.

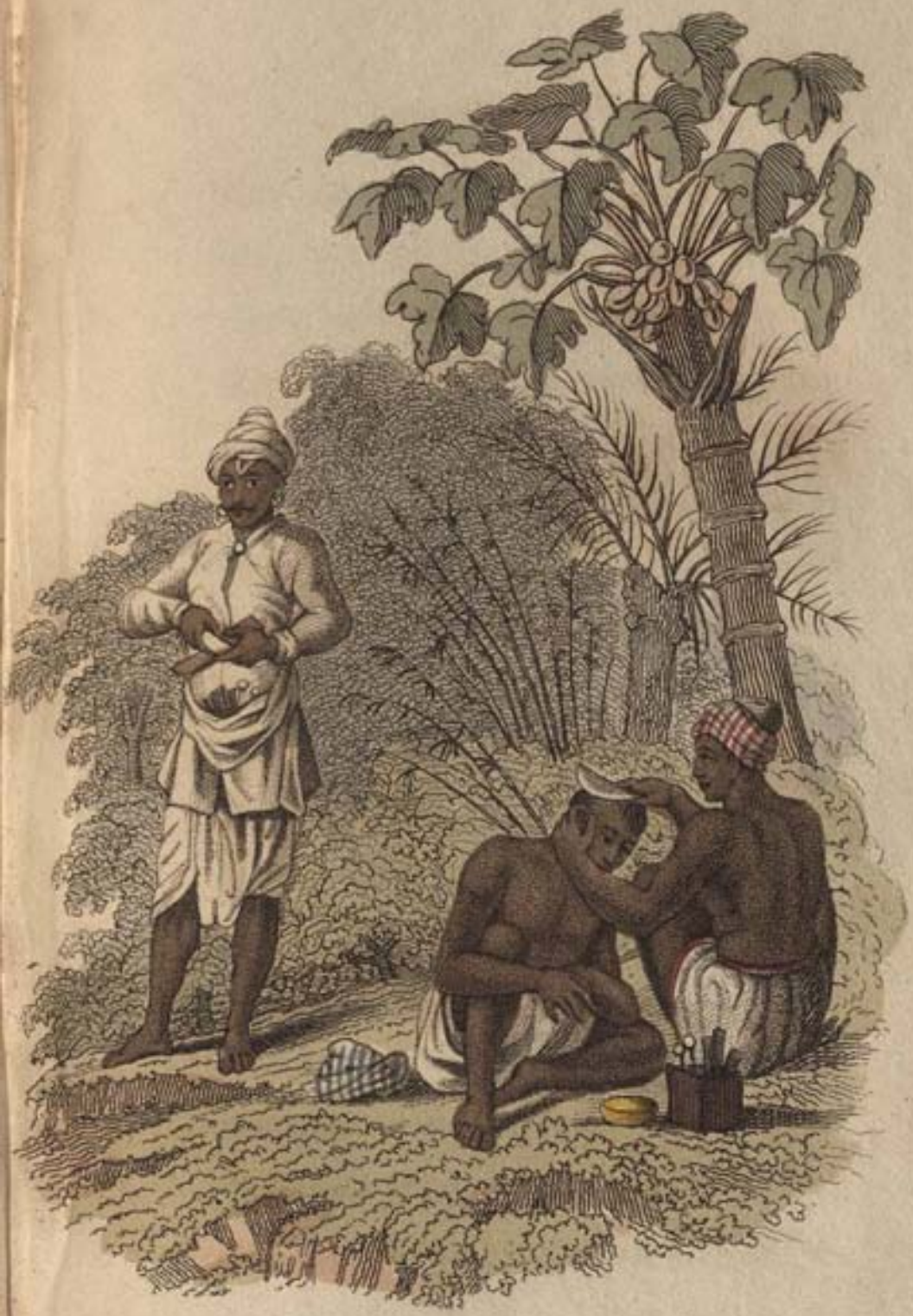
tion is extremely cooling and refreshing.

The *pecaulees*, or water-carriers belonging to the army, have already been noticed in our third volume. Their leather bottles are carried by oxen. In the engraving is seen a man of this profession carrying his bottle himself. It is his business to supply houses, or to water the *tattees*, a species of hurdle, made of split bamboo, having the inerstices filled up with rushes or grass, which are placed before all the apertures of habitations, for the purpose of cooling the air.

TELINGA BARBER AND MALABAR BARBER.

The barbers belong to the caste of the Sooders. They travel about in the towns and country, with a small steel mirror, two or three inches broad, a little leaden dish that scarcely holds a couple of spoonfuls of water; an ear-cleaner, a small gouge resembling that used by joiners, for cutting the nails, and a few broad knives with wooden handles, which serve for rasors.

When they shave a person, they make him sit down on the ground and themselves squat before him. In this pos-



Telinga Barber. Malabar Barber.

Pub.d by R. Ackermann. London. 1822.

ture, they dip a couple of fingers in the little basin, using no soap and merely rubbing the beard with the small quantity of water which thus adheres to the fingers. They then take one of their knives, give it an edge by passing it several times over the hand, and use it in the same manner as the wood-cutter does his hatchet to fell a young oak. The operation is rather painful, but he who undergoes it is sure that he shall escape at least without a cut.

The functions of the barber are much more extensive than among us. It is his duty to trim the eye-brows, to remove hairs from the nose, and to clean the ears. This last operation is performed by the rapid rolling of a small

cylinder, which occasions a humming and tingling, but unattended with any disagreeable sensation or the least danger to the organ: and at the same time the ears are as completely cleansed as they could be by any other method. To finish earning his halfpenny, the barber cuts the toe-nails with his gouge. The operator lays hold of the toe with his left hand, and uses the gouge with his right: at one stroke the nail is cut with a precision and neatness not to be obtained by employing ordinary scissors.

The Telinga barbers are extremely expert at shaving, cleaning the ears and cracking the vertebræ of the neck. The latter operation stretches and imparts suppleness to the nerves. These bar-

bers shave the Europeans, who highly extol their skill, and have induced them to adopt our razors. They officiate also as musicians in the pagodas, where they beat the *talloo,* a kind of kettle-drum, and play on the flute as an accompaniment to the dancing of the bayaderes and devedassees.

The Malabar barbers perform nearly the same functions as the Telingas; but they never play on musical instruments at the pagodas.

Their mode of operating is sufficiently curious to deserve describing. They commonly set up shop under a tree, the foliage of which screens them from the sun. Their basin is the half of a cocoa-nut shell; and their razors have very

broad blades, the edge of which is convex.

The Malabars shave not only the beard but likewise the whole head, with the exception of a small lock at the crown, and their mustaches, which they constantly retain.

The Parias have the whole top and back of the head shaved, but leave a lock on either side above the ears.

In the interior of the country, the barbers frequently use a piece of glass, from a broken mirror or bottle, for a rasor; which must make shaving an extremely painful operation.

The Hindoos are accustomed from their earliest youth to rub themselves with a depilatory ointment, and they

take particular care to remove such superfluous hairs as may have escaped this first operation. The females attach infinite value to their hair, which is in general black, and thick, but nearly as coarse as horse-hair, and they give it a brilliant gloss by anointing it with cocoa-nut or mustard-seed oil.

None but the wealthy send for the barbers to attend them at their own houses.

PHYSICIANS.

The Hindoo physicians are of the caste of the Sooders. They are extremely ignorant and follow at the same time the profession of surgeons and apothecaries.

In this country there are no schools of medicine or surgery. The physician leaves his son, his nephew or his cousin a collection of recipes, with which the new doctor begins to practise the Esculapian art, with as much assurance as if he had spent his whole life in studying the secrets of nature. These recipes are in verse, that they may be the

more easily remembered, and resemble the collections of wonderful secrets, which the mountebanks in many parts of Europe sell in the public places to the gaping populace. It frequently happens that a washerman, a weaver, or other artisan, for want of employment turns physician; and the afflicted Hindoo commits himself with confidence to the hands of these empirics, though he would not dare to call in a European physician to his assistance, because his religion enjoins him not to suffer himself to be touched by a foreigner.

The Hindoos have never ventured to apply the knife to a corpse, for the purpose of studying the form, functions, and use of the different parts of the

human body. Hence their gross ignorance of physiology and the deplorable state of surgery among them. They set a broken or dislocated limb just as it happens. As to sores and wounds, their sobriety, the power of nature, and the purity of the atmosphere are much more efficacious than the juices of pounded herbs and the plasters with which they pretend to heal them.

The physicians administer few medicines internally and prescribe scarcely any other applications than ointments and poultices.

When the disease is not to be subdued by the ordinary remedies, the doctor has recourse to enchantments like the ancient Persians, Greeks, and

Romans, who attributed certain diseases to supernatural causes. Superstition is all over the world the offspring of ignorance and imposture.

The native practitioners rarely perform any surgical operation, excepting the removal of a part already partially divided. They scarcely ever bleed; and in this respect, it will probably be allowed that they act with judgment, when the climate and mode of life of the Hindoos are considered. Be this as it may, they make amends for not bleeding by diet, which is their grand specific for all disorders. They subject their patients, for a great length of time, to the strictest regimen, and then give them draughts composed of

cloves, aniseed, and other ingredients of a very heating nature; inflammation frequently supervenes and carries off the patient.

The Mahometans, who have not such a horror of blood as the Hindoos, sometimes bleed; but scarcely ever for any but external complaints. Their process too, differs from ours, for both the name and the use of the lancet are equally unknown among the natives of Hindoostan. They scarify the ailing part with the point of a knife, and apply to it a kind of copper cupping-dish, with a long tube affixed to it, by means of which they suck the blood with the mouth.

In the southern part of the penin-

sula, the bad quality of the water occasions a disease, known by the name of the *nerve-worm*. The person afflicted with it, first perceives an inconsiderable swelling, on different parts of the body, especially the legs. A white spot appears on the top of the tumour: this is the end of the worm, which must be seized with a pair of nippers, and rolled every day, by little and little, round a quill. This operation lasts several weeks. When the worm is extracted whole, the disorder is cured: but should it break, it would putrify in the tumour, and the most dangerous consequences might ensue.

For the cholic these people recommend a remedy, which, according to

them, has never failed of success. They take an iron ring, about an inch and a half in diameter and proportionably thick; this they make red-hot in the fire; and laying the patient on his back, apply it to the belly, round the navel. A sudden revolution ensues in his inside, and the pains of the cholic speedily subside. The remedy, it must be acknowledged, is worse than the disease.

By way of curing epilepsy they make the patient eat a species of crow called *graya;* and hence they give the same name to the disease. Father Papin, a missionary, however, asserts, that he knew a Hindoo who had the scar of a deep burn made on the middle of his forehead, when he was twelve years old

as a cure for epilepsy. It was cauterized to the very bone with a gold button; and he had ever afterwards been quite free from the disorder. They have also another remedy which is less painful: at the beginning of the fit they apply three or four large leeches to the back of the head; if these fail of producing the desired effect, more are added, till the patient comes to himself.

Some of the fevers of this country are extremely dangerous. Sonnerat describes one species, to which the Parias are particularly subject, because they live partly on putrid flesh: it is so malignant, as frequently to carry off the patient on the fifth day. For this class of diseases the physicians pre-

scribe rice-water, and the pounded root of the *melia azedarac* is likewise employed by them with success. The latter serves instead of quinquina. They even assert that it is the same root, and that when employed quite fresh it has more virtue than the bark imported from Europe, which loses part of its strength during the voyage. Should the patient become delirious, he is supposed to be possessed by the devil; and the priests, the Pandarons, and other impostors, immediately resort to all kinds of ridiculous ceremonies, for the purpose of driving out the evil spirit.

Though the materia medica of the Hindoos consists chiefly of vegetables,

yet their physicians are not strangers to the use of minerals. Thus they employ arsenic not only in elephantiasis, but also in rheumatic, paralytic, and nervous affections. The mixture which they extol as an efficacious remedy in these cases, consists of one part of arsenic to six of pepper, taken in the form of pills. This remedy is said to have an equally decisive effect in the venereal disease, which is very common in Hindoostan, and is there called Persian fire, after mercury, in the form of cinnabar, has failed.

For the gout they prescribe a powder, the principal ingredient of which is sulphur. Sonnerat informs us, however, that they possess a much more

powerful medicine for that disease known by the name of the *bitter remedy*, and composed of gum guyacum, aloes and myrrh.

The disorders arising from langour and debility are very common in Hindoostan: hence almost all their medicines are composed of herbs, roots and aromatic and stimulating decoctions. The Hindoos are equally subject to colds and cutaneous diseases, because, sleeping almost always nearly naked on the ground, they are exposed to all the variations of temperature and to the bites of imperceptible insects.

To this sketch of the state of medicine in Hindoostan we subjoin the following observations by Mr. Under-

wood, a professional man, who resided many years at Madras.

It appears to Europeans that the natives of India are extremely ignorant in the practice of physic. They have many remedies, chiefly roots and herbs, which are generally given in the form of powders. The practitioners are poor men of a particular caste, who sit by the side of the high roads and market-paths, with small boxes containing various kinds of powder, which is administered with particular instructions, and a promise of cure in a specific number of days. In all complaints they enforce abstinence, seldom allowing the patient any other nourishment than rice-gruel. In certain diseases they

give cinnabar, occasionally with success; but the improper use of it frequently causes ulceration to spread to a very great extent.

The natives are extremely bigotted to their own remedies, which, without improvement or alteration, are handed down from father to son through succeeding generations. They, therefore, seldom apply for the assistance of Europeans until the case appears hopeless from their own prescriptions. All cases of fractures or dislocations are consigned to the potters; a class of people abounding in Hindoostan, for making the water-jars and cooking utensils of red clay so universally used. The potter places the limb of his pa-

tient in what he considers the best situation, and then covers the part affected with moist clay: this, when dry, fixes the limb, and under such treatment, simple and compound fractures often do well; but, as may be expected from this process, distortions and stiff joints are more frequently the consequence.

For spasmodic affections the natives of India generally apply the juice of the milk-bush to the parts affected, which acts like a blister. In more serious cases they use the actual cautery: from this cause it is common to see horses, oxen, labouring men, especially palanquin-bearers, and porters

of heavy burdens, marked in many places by a hot iron.

Mr. Underwood farther states, that though having no high opinion of the general mode of practice among the natives, yet in a few instances, he should give the preference to their remedies, particularly in the opthalmia, or sore eye of India, in which the inflammation frequently runs so high that the sight is destroyed, unless by some active means the affection can be removed. This is best done, in Mr. Underwood's opinion, by an early application of what is called at Madras, the *country remedy;* which is a thin paste made by burning a little alum on a hot iron, and mixing it with

lime juice by a spatula into a paste. This is applied over both eye-lids, to the extent of the circle of the orbit, at going to rest, and washed off in the morning with a decoction of tamarind-leaves. There is not perhaps a better or more certain cure for a disease that frequently causes blindness, with which a surprising number of the natives especially among the poor, are afflicted.

To remove a cataract, the practitioner makes a small puncture with the point of the lancet, immediately behind the iris, into which he introduces a particular instrument so guided as to depress the cataract. This ope-

ration Mr. Underwood prefers to any other mode yet practised, as it occasions less injury to the eye.

Such is the medical and surgical practice among the natives of Coromandel, and the same system is generally followed throughout Hindoostan.

The Hindoos, both in sickness and in health, have frequent recourse to frictions. When a wealthy Hindoo lies down, he has his servants to rub him gently with the bare hand, and they perform this office with equal delicacy and dexterity. This practice is universally followed in the east. It has been adopted by the Dutch and the

Portuguese settled in India; and perhaps it is necessary in a climate where the blood, if we may be allowed the expression, continually needs to be kept in motion.

THE SHOEMAKER.

The *sakeelees*, or shoemakers, are to the left hand what the Parias are to the right; but they are still more despised, because they employ cow-hide in their trade.

There are three sorts of Indian shoes. The first is made of wood, and provided with a wooden button fixed between the great toe and that next to it. This kind of shoe is used only in the house, and is made by the carpenters. It would be a real torment to a European to be obliged to wear these clogs.

The second sort is a species of lea-

ther sandal resembling that worn by the Romans. The great toe is fixed in a kind of case, and two thongs crossing at the heel tie over the instep. These sandals are commonly worn in travelling; and they would be tolerably convenient, if the case for the great toe were not in general so large, that sand and small stones get into it, and occasion severe pain in walking.

The third kind is the Moorish slipper, which terminates in a curved peak, and is worn only by persons belonging to high castes. These slippers are made by the Mahratta shoemakers. Those of princes are embroidered with gold, silver, or pearls. This slipper is ele-

gant and well suited to the costume of the Mahrattas.

It is the *sakeelees* who work for the Europeans. When a person bespeaks a pair of shoes, he is obliged to pay for them beforehand. With the money he has received, the *sakeelee* buys a sheep, of a species that is covered with hair, and having large pendent ears, the skin of which he uses for the purpose. They have no other tools than a knife and an awl, and no shops where they can buy leather. Thus they have to prepare themselves both the soles and upper leather: they take measure with a cocoa-leaf, and use no lasts. A pagoda will pay for four or

five pair of shoes, and a pair of boots costs from ten to twelve shillings.

The huts of the shoemakers are in separate quarters, outside of the towns and even of the villages. On them devolves the odious office of executioners in the European settlements.

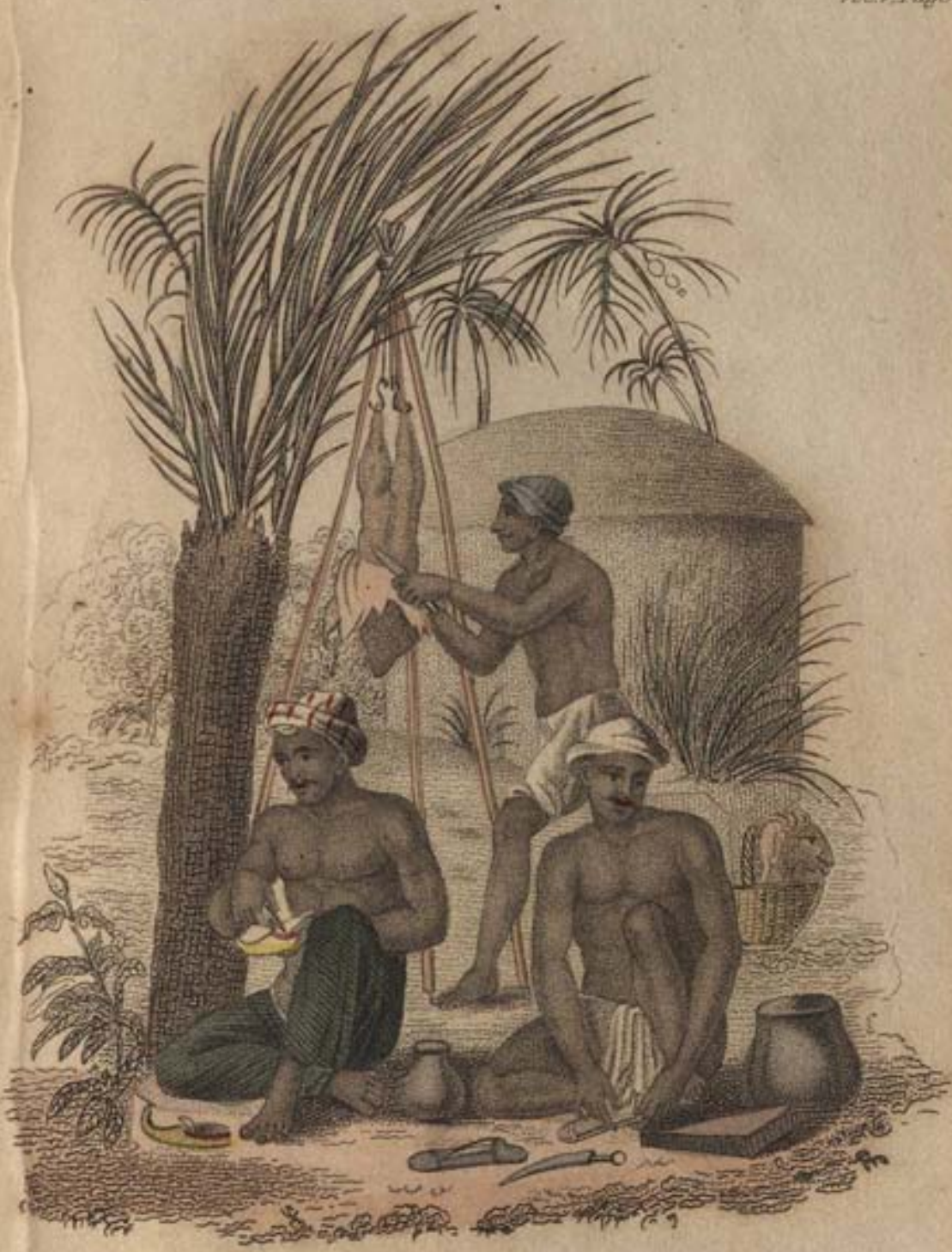
The shoes will not last longer than a week when the weather is fine. They are neatly made, but a person cannot walk with them in a shower of rain without getting wet feet.

If the shoemaker can tan the hide and work it up the same day that the beast died or was killed, he does. He throws down the strap to flay the goat which he has bought, scratches off the hair with his nails as much as with the

instrument, and at night carries home the shoes that he has made out of the hide. The annexed engraving represents this artisan in his double capacity of butcher and shoemaker.

Though the shoemakers form, as we have seen, one of the most despised classes of the Hindoos, their wives may nevertheless arrive at high consideration. The following narrative is extracted from the unpublished manuscript of a missionary.

It happened, says he, that while I was at Tanjore, a woman of the lowest class, a shoemaker's wife, having lost her husband, and being ill-used by her mother-in-law, resolved to put an end to her mortifications by burning herself



Mahratta Shoemaker. Shoe-maker.

Pub.d by R. Ackermann, London, 1823.

alive. As soon as she had communicated her resolution to the caste of the shoemakers, they raised contributions among themselves, that the business might be conducted with due magnificence. They carried her about in procession for more than two months through the whole kingdom, collecting numerous donations from the rich as well as the poor, both appearing equally edified by such a resolution, and no longer considering her as a humble *sakeelee*, but as a female of a divine caste. The king, into whose presence she was conducted, presented her with an orange only, but earnestly entreated her to think of him, when she should be in paradise. Though persons of the

low castes cannot be admitted, according to the Hindoos, into the three paradises, yet none presumed to doubt that the mere resolution of this woman had raised her into the first caste, and that after death she would be a goddess to whom a chapel ought to be erected and offerings made. The nearer the moment of the sacrifice approached, the greater were the pomp and parade preparatory to it.

When the appointed day had arrived, she was once more led about on the king's finest elephant, adorned like an idol with the various presents collected during her pious peregrinations. She appeared with a serene and smiling countenance on the back of the enormous

animal, which was slowly conducted through the city, accompanied by the sound of instruments and the acclamations of the people, who preceded and followed the victim to the place where a large pile had been raised, near a hole containing a great quantity of burning wood. All were amazed at the sight of so large a fire, to which, from its intense heat, they could not approach very near: but she for whom it was prepared, without manifesting any alarm, alighted from the elephant, and after dancing some time about the fire, called her husband with a loud voice. She then distributed the ornaments with which she was covered among such of the assembly as she liked best, and bidding

them all farewell, ran swiftly round the hole, darted into the flames, and was in a moment buried under a heap of dry faggots, which several of the bystanders held ready in their hands to cover her with. At the same moment the latter set up loud cries, and the musicians made as much noise as they could with their instruments, not so much in honour of this cruel sacrifice, as to prevent the screams of the victim from being heard. When her body was reduced to ashes, the bystanders scrambled for the coals, with a view to preserve them as relics.

Nobler motives than those which actuated this unfortunate shoemaker's widow, induced the wives of the rajah of Marava to burn themselves in 1710,

with the corpse of that prince. Father Martin, a missionary, gives the following account of this event:—

A large hole was dug for this purpose out of the town and filled with wood in the form of a pile. The body of the deceased, in rich attire, was placed upon it, and it was kindled, after the Bramins had performed a great number of superstitious ceremonies. The unfortunate troop of females then appeared: like victims destined for sacrifice, they were covered with precious stones and crowned with flowers. They took several turns round the pile, the heat of which was felt at a great distance. The chief of these women held the dagger of the deceased, and addressing his successor—

"Take," said she, "the poniard which the prince employed to triumph over his enemies: never use it for any other purpose, and beware of imbruing it in the blood of your subjects; govern them like a father as he did, and your life will be long and happy like his. Since he is gone, there is nothing to detain me in this world, and all I have now to do is to follow him." With these words she delivered the dagger to the prince, who received it without any demonstration either of sorrow or compassion. The princess, turning undauntedly towards the pile and pronouncing the names of her gods, threw herself amidst the flames.

The next who followed her was sister to the rajah called Tondoman, who was

present at this cruel ceremony. When the princess delivered to him the jewels with which she was adorned, he could not restrain his tears, and clasping her in his arms tenderly embraced her. Without manifesting any emotion, but looking with composure sometimes at the pile, sometimes at the spectators, she cried aloud, " Sheeva! Sheeva!" and also darted into the flames.

The others quickly followed. Some of them shewed great firmness; others seemed to be much daunted and terrified. There was one, who, more timorous than her companions, ran up to a christian soldier, caught him in her arms and entreated him to save her: but the man was so much alarmed, that he pushed

her rudely back on the pile. These unhappy wretches no sooner felt the pain occasioned by the fire, than, uttering the most dreadful shrieks and scrambling one over another, they sprung up to reach the margin of the hole. A great quantity of wood was thrown in, either to knock them on the head, or to increase the fury of the flames. When they were consumed, the Bramins went up to the still reeking pile and performed a thousand ceremonies, not less superstitious than those which preceded, over the burning bones of the hapless victims. Next day they collected the bones mixed with ashes; and having wrapped them in rich cloths, carried them to a place near the island of

Ramasuren, where they threw them into the sea. The hole was filled up and on the spot was erected a temple, where offerings were daily made in honour of the prince and his wives, who were thenceforth numbered among the goddesses.

FISHERMEN.

The *makooas*, or fishermen, employ catamarans for fishing along the coast. These catamarans, a figure of which is given in the annexed plate, are rafts formed of three or four pieces of timber lashed together, the middlemost of which is longer than the others, that it may cut the water the better. It is scarcely possible to get on or off these rafts without a complete ducking.

At day-break a score of these rafts will put to sea, and stand off to the distance of two or three miles from the coast, returning at sun-set, or perhaps

CATAMARAN.

CHELINGH.

Pub.d by R. Ackermann, London, 1822.

not till late at night. The *makooas* then drag their vessels upon the beach, and carry the oars home with them.

Each catamaran is manned by two men only, one of whom squats cross-legged on the fore-part, and the other in the hinder part, as represented in the plate. They wear a pointed cap made of reeds, cocoa or palm leaves, into which they put letters which they are employed to carry, or any other articles which must be kept dry.

The *chelingh*, also represented in the engraving, is another kind of vessel, still more precarious than the catamaran: yet the Hindoos will brave the fury of storms in these frail craft, and defy the most violent breakers, to get

to shore. The *tindal*, or steersman, stands up for the convenience of looking about him. There are commonly three breakers at a little distance from one another. As soon as the boat is on the back of the first, the men on board cease rowing. At the moment when the wave is going to break, they row back a few paces, and intsantly shoot forward, like an arrow, on the back of the second breaker. The same manœuvre is performed for the third breaker, which is the most considerable, and which throws the *chelingh* upon the shore.

The coast of Coromandel is so beset with breakers, as to make the loading of vessels there extremely dangerous. The Hindoos, therefore, employ boats,

constructed for the purpose, which they call *massoolees*. These boats are formed of the bark of trees, the interstices of which are filled with straw. The elasticity of these boats prevents their being injured by the rocks. They are very liable, indeed, to leak; and it is necessary for one of the crew to be constantly baling out the water that enters. The Hindoos manage these *massoolees* with such dexterity that a person is perfectly safe in them. Besides, they never go far from the shore, and are such excellent swimmers, that, in case of accident, they would quickly extricate the passengers from their unpleasant situation.

THE DEALER IN PERFUMERY AND ODORIFEROUS WOODS.

The *choolea* are the dealers in perfumery, attar, or otto of roses, oil of sandal wood, and the different powders used by the Malabars for the distinctive marks of their castes. One of these, with his commodities spread out before him, is represented in the annexed engraving.

The discovery of that incomparable perfume, the attar of roses, is ascribed to Noor Mahl, the consort of the emperor Jehangir, called, for her exquisite

PERFUMER.

beauty, Noor Jehan, or the Light of the World. This princess had not only the largest baths, but even whole canals, filled with rose-water, that, when she walked abroad, she might enjoy its fragrance. One fine morning, walking with the emperor along such a canal, in his magnificent gardens near Sirinagur, in Cashmere, she observed a fine scum floating on the surface. Curiosity induced her to take up some of it, which was found to yield an odour far surpassing that of rose-water. She caused it to be minutely examined; and the native chemists produced from it that essence which is now so universally celebrated for its unrivalled scent and high price. Noor Mahl gave it

the name of *Atyr Jehangir*, in honour of the emperor, and diffused the use of it throughout all Hindoostan.

The attar of roses is extracted from those flowers by mere distillation. The process is as follows: into an alembic is put a certain quantity of fresh-gathered roses, forty pounds weight, for instance, with sixty pounds of water. The calix is left with the flower, but not the stalk. The whole is well mixed together with the hands, and a moderate fire kindled under the alembic. When the water begins to heat, the cap of the still is put on and the worm fixed. The crevices are carefully luted; the refrigeratory is filled with water; the receiver is fitted to the end of the

worm, and a fire, neither too slow nor too hot, is kept up. When the water, impregnated with the fragrant principle, begins to evaporate, and the alembic is strongly heated, the fire is gradually diminished, and the distillation continued till half the water is evaporated, which is generally the case in about four or five hours.

This rose-water is then poured on a similar quantity (forty pounds) of fresh-gathered roses, with the addition of from fifteen to twenty pounds of water. By repeating the process, a very fragrant rose-water is obtained, if the distillation has been conducted with care, and the roses were good and fresh. It is then poured into pans of earthenware,

or tinned metal, and left exposed to the cool night air. Next morning, the attar, or congealed essence, is found floating on the surface of the water. It is carefully removed with a thin shell or a skimmer, and put into a phial.

When a certain quantity has been thus obtained, the water and the pulp are separated from the pure essence; which is no difficult matter as far as relates to the water, since the essence congeals with a slight degree of cold, and the water may then be poured off. If the essence is afterwards warmed to render it fluid, the pulp will be precipitated, and may thus be separated. But, if the operation has been properly conducted, there will be no pulp, or at

least very little. The pulp, moreover, is not less strongly impregnated with the smell of roses than the attar itself, and ought to be preserved, after as much as possible of the essence has been collected. The remaining water may be used for fresh distillations, instead of ordinary water.

Such is the process employed for making the genuine attar of roses. But as these flowers, in Hindoostan, yield but a very small quantity of essence, and as this substance is highly esteemed there, various expedients have been devised to increase the quantity; but this effect has been produced at the expense of the quality. It is customary to add to the roses, when put into the

alembic, a certain quantity of raspings of sandal-wood, more or less, from one to five tolahs (half ounces). Sandal-wood contains an essential oil, which is easily disengaged by common distillation, and which, mixing with the rose-water and essence, becomes strongly impregnated with their fragrance. But the adulteration cannot be completely disguised; for the essential oil of sandal-wood is not congealed with an ordinary degree of cold; and its odour predominates in the mixture in spite of all the pains that may be taken to dispel it.

In Cashmere, sandal-wood is rarely employed to adulterate the attar: but its quantity is increased by distilling with the roses an herb which has an

agreeable smell, and which, without communicating any unpleasant odour to the attar, merely gives it a very bright green colour. Neither does this essence congeal with a slight degree of cold, like that which is extracted from pure roses.

Many other means of adulteration are employed, but the fraud is so gross and so palpable that it would be superfluous to describe them.

The quantity of essential oil which may be extracted from roses is very precarious and uncertain: for it depends not only on the skill of the distiller, but also on the quality of the roses and the season in which it is made. Even in Europe, where the processes of che-

mistry have been so greatly improved, some have obtained but half an ounce of essence from one hundred pounds of roses. Homberg extracted an ounce from the same quantity of flowers, and Hoffman upwards of two ounces. In these instances, the roses were stripped of the calix, and nothing was left but the leaves. In India it is very different. There the season must be extremely favourable, and the operation performed with great care, to obtain four *machas*, (about the fifth part of an ounce) from eighty pounds, which, deducting the calices, is something more than three drams to one hundred pounds of rose-leaves.

In 1787, lieutenant-colonel Polier,

who gave the process described above in the first volume of the Asiatic Researches, obtained no more than sixteen *tolahs* (eight ounces) of attar from fifty-four maunds, twenty-three syrs of roses, (4366 lbs.) the produce of a field of eleven English acres, which amounts to two drams to each hundred pounds.

The colour of the *attar* is not a sufficient criterion by which to judge of its quality, or the country from which it comes. In the same year, roses produced by the same soil, and distilled by the same process, may yield attar of different colours—for instance, of a beautiful emerald green, of a bright yellow, of a reddish hue, &c., merely

because they were not gathered on the same day.

The calices impair in no respect the quality of the attar; neither do they communicate to it a green colour, though they probably augment its quantity. The trouble there is to separate the calix from the flower will, besides, always prevent its rejection for the purpose of distillation.

Dealer in Betel, Areca &c.

Pub.d by R. Ackermann, London 1822.

DEALERS
IN
BETEL, ARECA, AND TOBACCO.

The *Comootees,* who deal in a great variety of articles, formerly belonged to the sect of the left hand; but since they prevailed on the Sooders of the right hand to receive them as their children, they are classed among the latter. Their distinctive mark on the forehead is a red within a yellow circle. *(See the engraving.)*

The Comootees are in general rich, and their wives are covered with jewels. The latter never serve in the bazars. It

is the Comootees who sell betel, areca, and tobacco.

Betel is a plant of the pepper family, which creeps and climbs like ivy, and has a leaf resembling that of the citron-tree, but longer and narrower towards the end. This plant needs support like the vine, and is cultivated in the same manner: it grows in every part of Hindoostan; the fruit somewhat resembles the tail of a lizard: it is rare and the preference is given to the leaf.

There are two species of betel, white and black; the former is most esteemed.

The Hindoos chew betel all day long and even at night: they always carry it about them, and offer it to those whom

they meet as we do snuff: but as this herb is of itself very bitter, they correct that quality by mixing it with areca, cardemum, cloves, cinnamon and lime.

Betel is very hot; it strengthens the stomach, preserves the teeth, imparts a healthy red colour to the gums and lips, and sweetens the breath. Some, however, assert, on the contrary, that betel rots the teeth, and that this is the reason why the Hindoos lose them so early.

A labourer, by chewing betel, is enabled to work two days together without taking any food.

The gardens in which betel is cultivated are surrounded by walls and

ditches. A keeper, appointed by the government, is stationed at the gate of every garden, to prevent any of this valuable plant from being carried away without permission. The gardeners themselves are not allowed to take more than twelve leaves at a time.

Areca is a species of nut about the size of a hen's egg ; it grows on a handsome tree of the same name belonging to the family of palms, about thirty feet high, the blossom of which is exquisitely fragrant. The rind of the fruit covers a succulent fibrous flesh, in the centre of which is the nut : it is the latter that is chiefly used by the Hindoos. This nut, somewhat resembling the nutmeg, is cut in slices, sprinkled

with lime, and then wrapped in betel leaves.

When areca thus prepared has been chewed for some time, it communicates to the saliva a beautiful purplish red tinge. This first saliva, which contains the greatest part of the lime, they spit out; and the rest is chewed till nothing is left but a tasteless residuum, which is then ejected.

In Hindoostan, there is no person high or low, rich or poor, male or female, but smokes tobacco, and the majority also chew it. Most of the Hindoos, instead of using the pipe, smoke with a *chiroutte*, or, as we should call it, a segar. The leaves are

formed into a roll in the shape of a sausage, as thick as a man's finger and about six inches in length : it is lighted at the thick end and the other is applied to the lips.

The Mahometans have a kind of pipe which they call the *hookah.* The lower part of this instrument is a receiver of pipe-clay or metal, embellished with silver ornaments, and half filled with water. The bowl is of silver, and the *chilloom,* or substance smoked, consists of a mixture of various kinds of aromatic herbs. The smoke passes through a very long tube and into the receiver, where it is purified of all its grosser and oleaginous particles, so that the

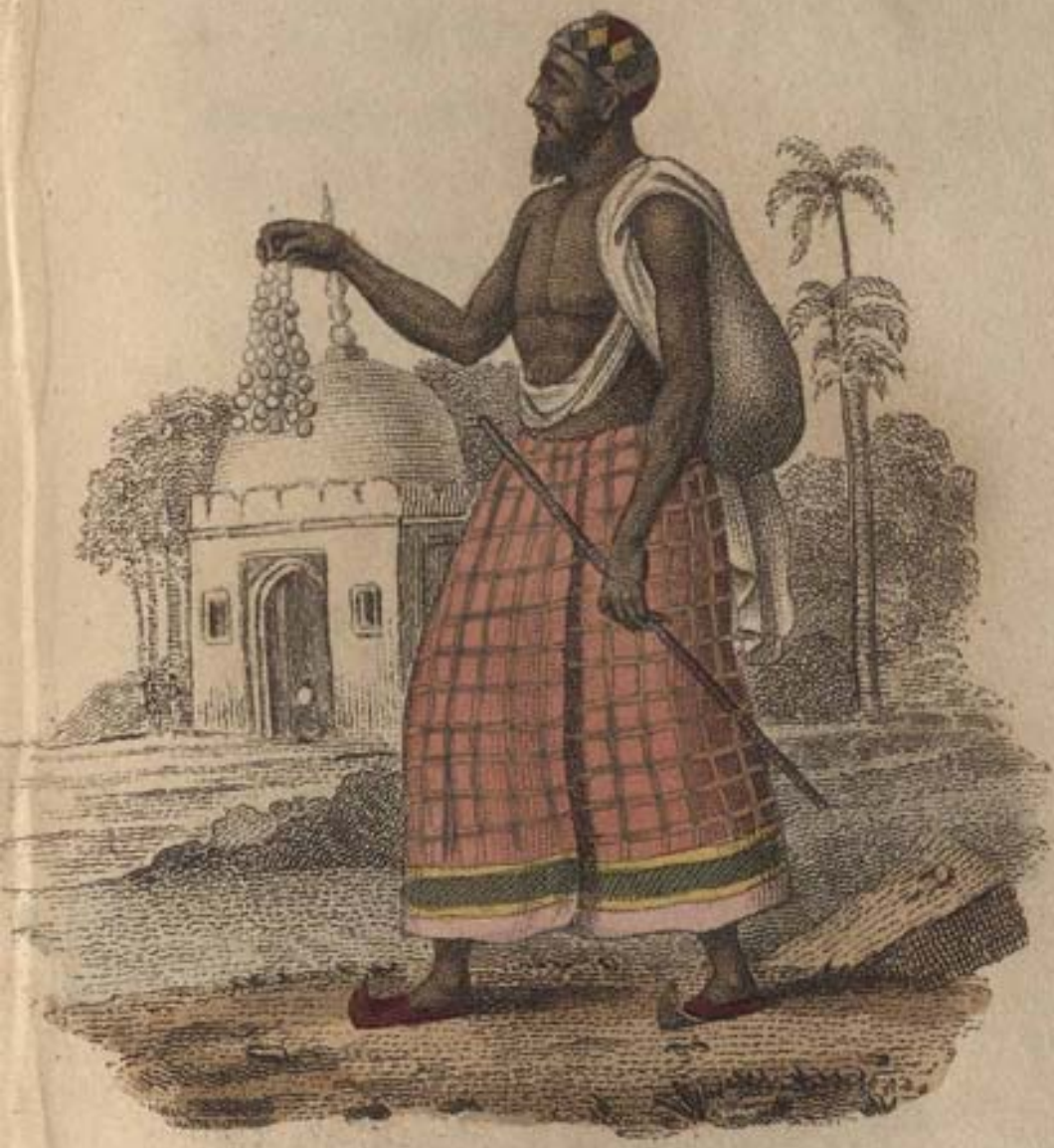
vapour, when it reaches the mouth, is light and gives out a very agreeable odour.

The Europeans settled in India are very fond of smoking the *hookah*. They have an attendant called *hookah-badar*, whose sole business it is to keep the pipe in order, to prepare the *chil-loom* and to attend them while smoking.

THE DEALER IN PEARLS.

The dealer in pearls, represented in the opposite engraving, is of a Moorish tribe called the Abbay, who have the privilege of buying and selling those articles. These people have very extensive dealings, and great numbers of them attend the pearl-fishery on the coasts of the island of Ceylon. They farm also the plantations of betel, which the Hindoos consume in such quantities, that one man will frequently chew one hundred and fifty leaves a day.

The persons belonging to this tribe are *Choolea*, and consequently Maho-



DEALER IN PEARLS.

Pub.d by R. Ackermann, London, 1822.

metans, for all the Choolea are of that religion.

The coast on which the pearl-oysters are found extends from Cape Comorin to the promontory of Ramanancor, where the island of Ceylon is almost united to the continent by a chain of rocks, called by some of the Europeans Adam's Bridge. The Hindoos relate, that this bridge was built by apes, when Vishnu, in his sixth incarnation, as Rama, passed over to Ceylon to recover his wife, Sita, whom the king of that island would have detained from him.

The pearl-fishery commences about the middle of February when the season is most favourable, and lasts till the southern monsoon, which takes place

about the 15th of April. At a later period, the boats would not be able to reach the banks where the fishery is carried on, the principal of which is opposite to Condatchey, and lies about twenty miles out at sea; the agitation of the water would prevent the divers from descending; and lastly the marine plants brought by the monsoon, and extending to a considerable distance from the coast, would be another obstacle.

Most of the divers, being Roman Catholics, cease working on Sunday to attend divine service in their churches at Arippo: but should any Mahometan or Hindoo festival intervene during the period of the fishery, or should it be

interrupted by bad weather or any other accident, the farmers of the fishery make up for the lost time by compelling the Catholics to work on Sunday.

The fear of sharks is another cause of interruption; so that during the two months the fishing days seldom exceed thirty.

As neither the season nor the convenience of the persons attending would permit the whole of the banks to be fished in one year, they are divided into three or four different portions, which are fished one portion annually in succession. The different portions are completely distinct, and are put up separately for sale to the highest bid-

der, who is usually a black merchant, each in the year in which it is to be fished. A sufficient interval is thus allowed to the oysters to attain their proper growth; and as the portion first used has generally recovered its maturity by the time the last portion has been fished, the fishery becomes almost regularly annual. The oysters are supposed to attain the state of complete maturity in seven years; and if left too long the pearl is said to become so large and inconvenient to the fish, that it throws it out of the shell.

Condatchey, the village from which the boats set out for the fishery, is situated in a bay, in the shape of a crescent, on the shore of which are to

be seen but a few wretched huts. The water here is bad and brackish. The soil produces nothing but a few trees and stunted shrubs. Those who are brought hither by the fishery are obliged to procure water from Arippo, a village with a small fort, lying about four miles to the south of Condatchey. Tigers, porcupines, wild boars, and pangolins, are common on this coast, where tortoises and various kinds of serpents are also met with.

During the fishing season, Condatchey, which is but a barren rock, exhibits a scene equally novel and surprising. Thousands of men of all colours, of different countries and castes, engaged in all sorts of occupations;

tents and huts constructed along the beach, each forming a distinct shop; and the multitude of boats returning in the evening with their rich cargoes; form altogether a curious spectacle for the European.

All the boats regularly sail and return together. A signal-gun is fired at Arippo, about ten o'clock at night, when the whole fleet sets sail with the land-breeze. They reach the banks before day-break, and at sun-rise commence fishing, in which they continue busily occupied till the sea-breeze, which rises about noon, warns them to return to the bay. As soon as they appear within sight, another gun is fired and the colours are hoisted, to inform

the anxious owners of their return. When the boats come to land, their cargoes sometimes amounting to thirty thousand oysters, are immediately taken out, as it is necessary to have them completely unloaded before night. Whatever may have been the success of their boats, the owners seldom wear the aspect of disappointment; for although they may have been unsuccessful one day, they look with perfect assurance of better fortune to the next; as the Bramins and conjurors, whom they implicitly trust in defiance of all experience, understand too well the liberality of a man in hopes of good forture, not to promise them all they can desire.

Each of the boats carries twenty men with a *tindal,* or chief boatman, who acts as pilot. Ten of the men row and assist the divers in reascending. The other ten are divers, who go down into the sea by five at a time; when the first five come up the other five go down, and by this method of alternately diving, they give each other time to recruit themselves for a fresh plunge.

Large stones are employed to accelerate the descent of the divers; five of these are brought in each boat for the purpose. They are of a reddish granite, common in the country, of a pyramidal shape, round at top and bottom, with a hole perforated through the smaller end sufficient to admit a rope. Some of the

divers use a stone shaped like a half moon, which they fasten round the belly when they mean to descend and thus keep their feet free.

These people are accustomed to dive from their very infancy, and fearlessly descend to the bottom, in from four to ten fathom water, in search of the oysters. The diver, when he is about to plunge, seizes the rope to which one of the stones we have described is attached, with the toes of his right foot, while he takes hold of a bag of network with those of his left; it being customary among all the Indians to use their toes in working or holding as well as their fingers, and such is the power of habit, that they can pick up even the

smallest thing from the ground with their toes as nimbly as a European could do with his fingers.

The diver, thus prepared, seizes another rope with his right hand, and holding his nostrils shut with the left, plunges into the water, and by the assistance of the stone soon reaches the bottom. He then hangs the net round his neck, and with much dexterity and all possible dispatch, collects as many oysters as he can, while he is able to remain under water, which is usually about two minutes. He then resumes his former position, makes a signal to those above by pulling the rope in his right hand, and is immediately drawn up and brought into the boat, leaving the

stone to be pulled up afterwards by the rope attached to it.

The exertion undergone during the process is so violent, that the divers, on being brought into the boat discharge water from the mouth, ears, and nostrils, and frequently even blood. This, however, does not hinder them from going down again in their turn. They will often make from forty to fifty plunges in one day, and at each plunge bring up about a hundred oysters. Some rub their bodies over with oil, and stuff their ears and noses to prevent the water from entering; while others use no precautions whatever and will even descend without any weight. Although the usual time of remaining under water

does not much exceed two minutes, yet there are instances of divers who could remain four and even five minutes. The most remarkable instance ever known was that of a diver who came from Anjango, in 1797, and who absolutely remained under water full six minutes.

All the divers, the most experienced not excepted, are extremely afraid of sharks, and nothing would induce them to descend before the *pillal kadtar*, or shark-conjurer, has performed the accustomed ceremonies. This prejudice is so deeply rooted in their minds, that the government is obliged to keep two of these conjurors at its own charge; but this does not prevent others from repairing to the spot from other parts

of Ceylon and the opposite coast, to take advantage of the superstition of these poor creatures.

The method of conjuring the shark is, to pronounce in a low tone a certain number of prayers which nobody understands and of which the conjurors themselves probably know not the meaning. They remain standing on the beach muttering something to themselves from sun-rise till the return of the boats. During this time they must neither sleep nor eat; otherwise their prayers would have no effect. They are merely allowed to drink, and of this permission they so largely avail themselves, that in general they soon become quite stupified and incapable of continuing their acts of

devotion. Sometimes the conjurors accompany the divers in the boats, and the latter are highly gratified to have their protectors so near them. When a diver perceives a shark, he makes a signal; the men are instantly pulled up and the boats return. The divers also, agreeably to the injunctions of the conjuror, abstain from food while they are at work, eating nothing till they have returned to shore and bathed in fresh water.

The owners of the boats sometimes sell the oysters before they are opened; and at others they open them at their own risk. In the latter case, the oysters, as soon as they are taken out of the boats, are placed in holes or pits dug in the

ground, to the depth of about two feet, or in small square inclosures cleared and fenced round for the purpose, each person having his own separate division. Mats are spread below them to prevent the oysters from touching the earth; and here they are left to die and rot. As soon as they have passed through the state of putrefaction and become dry, they are easily opened without any danger of injuring the pearls, which might be the case if they were opened fresh, as at that time to do so requires great force. On the shell being opened, the oyster is minutely examined for the pearls; it is usual even to boil the oyster, as the pearl, though commonly found in the shell, is

not unfrequently contained in the body of the fish itself. When the fishery is over, the places where the oysters have been deposited are sold by auction, because pearls are frequently left there mixed with sand.

The crews of the boats generally receive for their wages one-fourth of the produce of the fishery, or they are paid in money, as may be previously agreed on.

The boat-owners and merchants are apt to lose many of the best pearls, while the boats are on their return to the bay from the banks, as the oysters, when alive and left for some time undisturbed, frequently open their shells of their own accord; a pearl may then

be easily discovered and the oyster prevented by means of a bit of grass or soft wood from again closing its shell, till an opportunity offers of picking out the pearl. Those fellows who are employed to search among the fish also commit many depredations and even swallow the pearls to conceal them. When this is suspected the plan followed by the merchants is to lock the fellows up and give them strong emetics and other medicines which have frequently the effect of discovering the stolen goods.

Another method of thieving at which the Indians are very dexterous is as follows:—The owner of the boats being obliged to employ a number of persons to examine the oysters, have an overseer

in whom they can confide to watch them while at work. Before they begin, the rogues agree that one of them shall act the part of a thief and expose himself to punishment, in order to afford his accomplices an opportunity of doing business. When one of the gang has found an uncommonly fine pearl, he gives a signal to his accomplice, who immediately pretends to secrete one of little value, but in such a manner that he is sure of being detected in the fact. The overseer and the other workmen take the pearl from him, punish and turn him out: but amidst the bustle occasioned by the circumstance, and while the culprit is attempting to justify himself, the real thief finds means to

purloin the valuable pearl, and a share of the booty is allotted to him who has devoted himself for the whole gang.

The pestilential effluvia of the putrifying oysters renders the atmosphere of Condatchey extremely unwholsome during south-west winds. This putrefaction generates infinite multitudes of worms, flies, musquitoes, and other vermin. It may easily be conceived what a pernicious influence the extreme heat of the day, the cool nights, the copious dews, and the horrid stench must have on persons of weak constitutions. It is not surprising, that most of those who are ailing sink under it, and that a still greater number return

home with fevers, dysenteries and other equally dangerous diseases.

The pearls found at this fishery are of a whiter colour than those of the gulf of Ormus, on the Arabian coast; but in other respects they are not accounted so pure, or of such excellent quality: for though the white pearls are more esteemed in Europe, the natives prefer those of a yellowish or golden cast. Off Tutucoreen, which lies on the Coromandel coast, nearly opposite to Condatchey, there is another fishery; but the pearls found there are much inferior to the two species just mentioned, being tainted with a blue or grayish tinge.

In preparing the pearls, particularly in drilling and stringing them, the natives of India are wonderfully expert. The instrument they employ in drilling is a machine made of wood, and of a shape resembling an obtuse inverted cone, about six inches in length and four in breadth, which is supported upon three feet, each twelve inches long. In the upper flat surface of this machine, holes or pits are formed to receive the larger pearls, the smaller ones being beaten in with a little wooden hammer. The drilling instruments are spindles of various sizes, according to that of the pearls; they are turned round in a wooden head, by means of a bow-handle to which they

are attached. The pearls being placed in the pits which we have already mentioned, and the point of the spindle adjusted to them, the workman presses on the wooden head of the machine with his left hand, while his right is employed in turning round the bow-handle. During the process of drilling he occasionally moistens the pearl, by dipping the little finger of his right-hand in a cocoa-nut filled with water, which is placed by him for the purpose: this he does with a dexterity and quickness which scarcely impede the operation, and can only be acquired by much practice.

They have a variety of other instruments both for cutting and drilling the

pearls. To clean, round, and polish them to that state in which we see them, a powder made of the pearls themselves is employed. These different operations occupy a great number of the natives in various parts of Ceylon. In the black town of Columbo, in particular, many of them may every day be seen at this work.

As to figure, the pearls that are perfectly round are preferred to all the others; but there are some in the shape of a pear which surpass them in size. Tavernier informs us, that the largest he ever saw was of the latter form. He has not specified its weight, but according to the delineation which he gives, it

was one inch four lines and a half, French measure, in its longest diameter, and one inch across in the thickest part of the pear. It was perfectly beautiful and well formed, belonged to the then monarch of Persia, and was valued by the French traveller at 1,400,000 livres, or nearly £60,000 in English money.

It is a singular circumstance, that large pear-shaped pearls are much more numerous than perfectly round ones, of extraordinary size. The finest round oriental pearl that Tavernier met with measured scarcely eight lines in diameter, and yet the great Mogul himself possessed none that could match it.

Hyder Aly possessed a double string of seventy-eight pearls, each nine or ten lines in diameter, quite spherical, and of the finest water. He wore them round his turban, but only on extraordinary occasions. This was the ground-work of the invaluable pearl necklace belonging to his son, Tippoo Saib, which was lost when he fell in the storming of his capital.

The fishery is lucrative, on account of another marine production, namely, the shell called *sunk*, which, as we have seen, is used for a musical instrument. A shell of this species twisting to the left is an extraordinary rarity, and, according to the superstitious notions of

the Hindoos, of such immense value, that the fortunate pearl-fisher who finds one, may obtain ten or fifteen thousand pounds for his prize.

SCIENCES AND FINE ARTS.

OF THE SANSCRIT AND THE OTHER LANGUAGES OF HINDOOSTAN.

Were all other monuments swept away from the face of Hindoostan—says Mrs. Graham in her Letters on India—were its inhabitants destroyed and its name forgotten, the existence of the Sanscrit language would prove that it once contained a race which has reached a high degree of refinement, and which must have been blest with many rare advantages before such a language

could have been formed and polished. Amidst the wreck of the nations where it flourished, and superior to the havoc of war and of conquest, it remains a venerable monument of the splendour of other times, as the solid pyramid in the deserts of Egypt attests, that where now the whirlwind drives the overwhelming sand-wave, a numerous population once enlivened the plain, and the voice of industry once gladdened the woods.

The principal languages of Hindoostan are commonly reckoned to be four :

The *Sanscrit*, or sacred language, spoken, according to the poets, by the gods and celestial spirits ;

The *Pracrit*, or spoken language, which in dramas is used by females and good genii;

The *Paisachi*, which the poets put into the mouths of the dæmons whom they introduce into their works;

The *Magadhi*.

Some writers substitute for the two latter the *Apabhransa*, or jargon, and *Misra*, or mixed language.

The word *Sanscrit* literally signifies *adorned*. That language is indeed highly polished: it is cultivated in Hindoostan as the language of science, literature, laws and religion. Of its great antiquity, some idea may be formed from the time at which its most eminent poets flourished; which was about a

century before the christian era. Many centuries must have elapsed before the rules of so rich and perfect a language could have been established. It evidently draws its origin, says Mr. Colebrooke, from a primeval tongue, which was gradually refined in different climates and became Sanscrit in India, Pelavi in Persia, and Greek on the shores of the Mediterranean.

The Sanscrit, though now a dead language, was probably at one time the common language of India; nay, there is every reason to believe that it was spoken in the greatest part of Asia. The objection that might be urged against this opinion, on account of the extraordinary length of the compound

words can have no weight with those who know with what fluency the persons by whom it is still spoken express themselves in it.

The Hindoos themselves date the origin of their language from the creation of the world, when, say they, it was invented by the creator himself. Among their most ancient works in this language, the *Veda*, a religious book containing one hundred thousand four-line stanzas, is the most important. To this book they attribute an antiquity as fabulous as to the language itself: Sir William Jones nevertheless admits that it was probably composed 1580 years before the birth of Christ. In this case, however, it

would be considerably less ancient than the Mahabharat, a mythological heroic poem of 400,000 verses, which, according to the same profound writer, must have been written 3000 years anterior to the christian era. Another important work in the same language, the code of Menu, boasts of an equal antiquity.

The Sanscrit has fifty-two letters and seventeen declensions, each of which has its singular, dual and plural. The nouns have eight cases, so that there is no occasion for prepositions, the latter are therefore always prefixed to the verbs, in order to form compound words; and there are ten conjugations.

At present there are but very few

Bramins who study and make themselves complete masters of the Sanscrit: these are called Pundits, learned men. The regulation of the directors of the East India Company, requiring a certain proficiency in the oriental languages as a qualification for civil appointments in their service, and the consequent establishment of the Colleges at Calcutta and at Hertford, have of late years encouraged the cultivation of this language by Englishmen, to whose proficiency we are indebted for many elegant translations of some of its principal works into our native tongue. From the observations of some of these writers, we are justified in considering the Sanscrit as the mother not only of all the lan-

guages and dialects spoken in Asia between the Persian Gulf and the Chinese Ocean, but also of the Greek and Latin; and as the ground-work both of the modern European languages derived from the latter, and of those which are of Gothic or Teutonic descent. Among the latter the English is of course included. The limits to which we are confined in this work prevent us from entering deeper into this curious and interesting subject to the philologist; but such readers as wish to trace the analogy of the Sanscrit through other languages with the English are referred to an able article on Mr. Wilkins' Sanscrit Grammar, in the thirteenth volume of the *Edinburgh Review*.

Dow, one of the first of our countrymen who applied to the study of the Sanscrit, is of opinion, that this language was expressly invented by the Bramins to be the depository of their religion and philosophy. He conceives, that the formation of the Sanscrit could not be the effect of those fortuitous causes which gave birth to all other languages. The Arabic itself cannot be compared with it for the regularity of the etymology and grammatical order. It is too evident to admit of doubt that its principles were fixed by a society of scholars, who studied to render it regular and harmonious and to give it the utmost simplicity and energy of expression. Accordingly, how rich soever the San-

scrit may be, a grammar and a vocabulary of no great bulk are sufficient to convey a knowledge of its principles. All its roots may be comprised in a small number of pages, and the rules of the derivatives and terminations are so simple, that the etymology of every word may be immediately and easily perceived. The chief difficulty consists in the pronunciation, which is so sharp and strong that it is not to be acquired even by young persons without long practice; but when once mastered it both surprises and charms the ear by its boldness and its harmony.

Admitting with Dow, that the Sanscrit is one of the most beautiful and harmonious languages ever spoken by man,

we nevertheless cannot suppose that it was all at once and designedly invented by the Bramins, and not gradually polished like all other languages. It is much more natural to assume, that as it became improved, the Bramins vigilantly watched its progress, and proscribed every new word that deviated from the grammatical order, offended the ear, or transgressed the rules of etymology; and that in this manner they prevented the introduction of those irregularities and anomalies which are to be found in all other languages.

From the fragments of the history and literature of the Bramins which have been translated from the Sanscrit, we are authorised to conclude that ex-

cepting in times of civil or religious commotions these holy personages lived a life of seclusion and ease amid groves and in caverned rocks; where, surrounded by their pupils and their slaves, they cultivated poetry, music and astronomy; never deigning to appear in the active world but to receive the homage of courts, to direct the sovereign, and sometimes to pronounce upon him an anathema which was sure to be followed by the desertion of his slaves and the rebellion of his subjects.

It was no doubt in this profound retirement, that the Bramins, giving themselves up to study, polished their sacred language, and composed those numerous treatises of grammar, which have since

employed so many commentators, whose works have been deemed of such importance that the authors are considered as inspired. The most ancient of the original treatises is the grammar of Panini, which is still of the highest authority: but its antiquity and studied brevity have occasioned numerous explanations all of which are regarded as divine.

The *Amera Cocha*, the most esteemed of all the vocabularies, was composed by Amera Sinha, one of the nine poets who adorned the court of Vicramaditya. His work has passed through the hands of numerous commentators, and many vocabularies have been compiled to supply its deficiencies, exclusively of vari-

ous nomenclatures and the Niganthi of the Vedas, which explains obsolete words and acceptations that have fallen into disuse.

In this vocabulary of Amera Sinha, composed about two thousand years ago, we meet with the names of various arts and instruments, which would prove, that at this remote period the Hindoos were acquainted with inventions that we believe to be of modern date, such as *Agnee-astra*, fire-arms, and *Shet-agnee*, cannon, if we were certain that the *Amera Cocha* had not received any addition or interpolation.

Under the name of Pracrit were formerly included all the written dialects employed by men of letters; but the

term is now generally restricted to the language spoken on the banks of the Seraswattee.

There were ten principal dialects spoken by the same number of civilised nations who occupied the provinces of Hindoostan and Deccan. Several of these dialects are still in current use. These are: 1. the Pracrit, of which we have already treated; 2. the Canyacubya, which seems to be the groundwork of the modern Hindoostanee, and which is still spoken in the villages in the interior of the country; 3. the Gaura, or Bengalee, which has some original poems, besides many translations from the Sanscrit; 4. the *Maithila*, or Tirhuctya, used in the sircar of Tirhut and

the adjoining districts; 5. the Uriga, spoken on the coast of Orissa; 6. the Gurjera, in Guzerat; 7. the Tamul, called by the Europeans Malabar, spoken from Cape Comorin, the southern extremity of India, to the 12th or 13th degree of north latitude; 8. the Mahratta, in which there are some treatises of logic and philosophy, besides many original poems, chiefly in honour of Rama and Crishna, and some translations from the Sanscrit; 9. the Canara, the ancient language of the Carnatic; 10. the Telinga, formerly cultivated by the poets and still spoken in the province of that name.

At the courts of the Mahometan princes the Mogul language, a mixture

of the Arabic, Tartar and Persian, is spoken. It is in the last-mentioned language that all diplomatic business between the Europeans and the Hindoo princes is transacted.

ASTRONOMY.

Of all the sciences cultivated by man, that which affords strongest proof of the superiority of his genius is, without dispute, astronomy. Sublime as the heavens which are the object of his study, it seems to raise man above the earth and to place him in the centre of beauty, order and harmony. The constellations sparkling in the magnificent etherial vault could not fail to attract the notice of the very first inhabitants of the earth. To trace the progress of astronomy from its origin would be to

follow the progress of the human mind from the beginning of the world.

The antiquity that ought to be attributed to the Indian astronomy has of late years occasioned considerable discussion. According to the most respectable authorities, it would appear, that its earliest observations cannot be of later date than three or four thousand years before the christian era.

Some philosophers have conjectured that the Hindoos received their astronomy from the Greeks and Arabs: but we cannot admit this supposition, when we consider that the astronomers of Greece, who enjoyed so many advantages over those of Hindoostan, nevertheless fell into errors which were

avoided by the latter. To this we may add, that the calculation of the Hindoos, more accurate than that of the Greeks, agrees in regard to the delineation of the heavens at the most remote periods with the results obtained by the improved astronomy of modern Europe. Among the many proofs that might be adduced in support of the opinion that Hindoostan was the cradle of the science, not the least remarkable is, that the rule for calculating the exact proportion between the diameter and circumference of a circle was employed by the Hindoos long before it was known in Europe.

Others have denied to the Hindoos a knowledge of the solar year, of the

figure of the earth, and of other fundamental truths of astronomy and geography, partly from ignorance, and partly because they have confounded their poetical with their genuine, or mathematical astronomy. On this subject Sir William Jones received the following explanation from Romatschandra, an eminent Pundit and able astronomer.

"The Puranicas, that is, the poetic fabulists, will tell you that our earth is a plane supported by eight mountains and surrounded by seven seas, consisting of milk, nectar and honey; that the country in which we live is one of the seven islands to which eleven others are subordinate; that each region is

protected by a god who rides about on a prodigious elephant, and that in the centre of it stands a resplendent mountain of gold, called Meru.

"We, (the Iyotishicas, or mathematical astronomers) on the other hand believe, that the earth is shaped like the *cadamba* fruit and consequently a spheroid; and admit only four great oceans of salt water, in which are several extensive continents with innumerable islands.

"The Puranicas will tell you that an immense dragon's head swallows the moon, and thus occasions the eclipses of that luminary: but we know that the imaginary head and tail of the dragon signify the nodes and points formed

by the intersection of the ecliptic and the moon's course. In short, their system is merely imaginary: but we admit nothing that cannot be proved by incontestible evidence."

In the same dissertation into which Sir William Jones has introduced this important evidence of the accuracy of the astronomical notions of the Hindoos, he shows, that the division of the zodiac and its constellations originated, not with the Greeks as Montucla asserts, but with the ancient Hindoos, or with some nation of still higher antiquity, from whom it was borrowed by them. We are therefore compelled to admit, that if the Hindoos were not the inventors of their astronomy, they have

not, at least, received it from any yet existing nation.

The Hindoo books on astronomy have the general name of Jyotish Sastras. Here are to be discovered rays of a bright light, which must have illumined mankind at so early a period, that Bailly seems to doubt whether we should not consider them as the remains of antediluvian science—fragments of a system that has been lost, and whose very ruins excite our admiration.

The *Surya Siddhanta* seems to be the most ancient of the Jyotish Sastras, and is certainly of the highest authority. It is said to have been revealed to the sage Meya, by Surya, or the sun, about

the year of the world 1956, that is, about three centuries after the deluge. It fixes the obliquity of the ecliptic at twenty-four degrees; and if this datum were founded on observations made at the time of compiling this Sastra, no doubt of its high antiquity could be entertained.

The division of the Hindoo zodiac into lines and degrees is the same as ours. The year is sidereal, that is, it comprehends the whole time taken by the sun to return to a certain star. It commences at the moment when that luminary enters the sign Aries; each astronomical month containing as many days and fractions of days as the sun continues in the corresponding sign

The civil time differs from the astronomical year in rejecting the fractions of days; while the civil year and month begin at sun-rise instead of midnight.

The epoch from which the Hindoos calculate the motions of the planets, is that point of time when, according to their respective courses, they must have been in conjunction in the first degree of Aries, a thousand million years ago; and double that period will elapse before they are again in the same position. The prodigious interval of time between two conjunctions of all the planets is called a *calpa*, or a mythological day of Brama. The *calpa*, as we have stated in a former volume, is divided into *manuantaras*, and into great and

little *yougs*. We are puzzled to discover the object of some of these divisions; but the greater *youg* is an anomalistic period, at the expiration of which the sun and moon are found together at the entrance of Aries. The division of the great *youg* into *satya*, *treta*, *dwapara*, and *cali youg*, is conjectured by some to denote the precession of the equinoxes; while others consider them as purely mythological, like the golden, silver, brass, and iron ages of the western poets.

One of the methods employed by the Jyotish Bramins to find the latitude of a place, is to observe the *palabha*, or shadow projected from a perpendicular gnomon, when the sun is in the equa-

tor; and they obtain the longitude by observation of the eclipses of the moon calculated for the first meridian, which the Surya Siddhanta makes pass over Lanca, or Ceylon.

This Sastra also hints at the manner of observing the places of the stars by means of the armillary sphere, for the construction of which various directions are given in different astronomical books of the Hindoos.

The polar star of the Hindoos and of the Greek astronomers was not that which bears the name with us, and forms the tail of the Little Bear. Bailly conjectures that the star η of the Dragon, which was nearest to the pole 1326 years before Christ, was the polar star men-

tioned by Eudoxus. It is probable that this star, or the star α, in the same constellation, which was less than one degree distantfrom the pole 2836 years before the Christian era, was the polar star of the ancient Hindoo astronomers.

The Hindoos have a division of the ecliptic and zodiac into twelve signs or constellations, which nearly agree in figure and denomination with those of the Greeks, and differ from the latter in this respect only, that the places of the constellations are carried a little farther to the west. Their most ancient division of the ecliptic, however, was into twenty-seven parts, nearly corresponding with the *mansil*, or mansions of the moon, used by the Arabs, who

might possibly have borrowed them from the Hindoos, or derived them from the same common source of a more ancient astronomy.

ALGEBRA AND ARITHMETIC.

We are indebted to the industry and ability of Mr. Strachey for an English translation of a Sanscrit work on algebra, intituled *Bija Gannita*, written by Bhascara Acharya, about the year 1188 of our era. This work seems to relate particularly to astronomy and to have been compiled from more ancient treatises. In the account given of it in the *Edinburgh Review*, for July 1813, we find, among other curious remarks, an equally ingenious and plausible explanation of the use of the word *colours*, employed by the

Hindoos to express unknown quantities. As the operations of arithmetic have received the name of *calculus* from the pebbles or small stones used for carrying them on before the invention of numerical signs; so unknown quantities, in the algebra of the Hindoos, must have derived the appellation of *colours* from the shells, flowers, or pieces of differently coloured cloth, used in the origin of that science. Hence we have a strong reason for presuming that the Hindoo algebra is a native invention. We have, however, more direct evidence in the solution of several difficult problems given in the *Bija Gannita*, some of which were unknown in Europe till the time of

Euler, which certainly could not have been the case, had the Hindoos derived their algebra from the Greek and Arabian writers, to whom we are indebted for the modern science.

Mr. Burrow is of opinion, that the Hindoos possessed a differential method similar to Newton's. He also conjectures that they were acquainted with what we term Newton's binomial theorem, at least, so much as relates to the entire and positive exponent. In support of this opinion he adduces the Hindoo solution of this problem :—

The palace of a rajah had eight doors: these doors could open one by one, two by two, three by three, and so on, till all of them opened together.

The question is, how many times this could be done.

Write down the number of the doors, beginning on the left with one, and ending on the right with eight; and above these put the same figures, but in the inverse order, thus:—

8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

Divide the number 8 by the unit below it, and the quotient 8 expresses the number of times that the doors can open one by one. Multiply the number 8 by 7, the next figure on the right, and divide the product 56 by 2 which is under the 7, and you will have 28 for the number of times that the doors

can open two by two. Multiply the last quotient, 28, by the next term 6, and divide the product by 3, underneath it, and the quotient, 56, is the number of times that the doors can open three by three. In the same manner 70 will be found to be the number of times that four can open at once; 56 for five; 28 for 6; 8 for seven; and 1 for eight.

From this problem Delambre, the French mathematician merely concludes, that the Hindoos were acquainted with the rule for calculating any given number of combinations; but it does not appear that they knew what composes the coefficients of the different terms of the binomial theorem.

One of the inventions which does

most honour to the Hindoos, is that of the ten cyphers or figures which we employ in arithmetic. This invention greatly facilitates calculation, which was previously rendered extremely complicated by the letters of the alphabet, borrowed by the Europeans from the Greeks and Romans. It is a fact, of which few are aware, that we owe this obligation to the Hindoos ; for the invention of cyphers is generally ascribed to the Arabs, from whom we actually received it, but who themselves borrowed it from the Hindoos.

The facility with which the Hindoos perform the most difficult calculations is truly admirable. They resolve, frequently from memory, an arithmetical

problem, the solution of which would not be found by a European without a long calculation with pen or pencil.

It is probable that most of the best Hindoo books have been lost. We meet with not a single elementary work of geometry. Many other books, nevertheless, prove that the Hindoos possessed, at no very distant period, elements of that science apparently more extensive than those of Euclid.

The manner of dividing time is unequal, as it depends on the seasons and consequently on the length of the day and night. The great divisions are four day-watches and four night-watches, each of which of course varies with the season; but these watches are subdi-

vided into *ghurrees*, which are fixed, and contain twenty-four of our minutes: so that there are sixty *ghurrees* in twenty-four hours, though the number of *ghurrees* in each watch, or *puhur*, is continually changing. The *ghurree* is divided into sixty *puls*; the *pul* into sixty *bipuls*; the *bipul* into sixty *tils*, or *anoopuls*. To measure these different spaces of time for the ordinary purposes of life, they use a *kutoree*, or thin brass cup, having a small hole in the bottom. A large vessel is filled with water and this cup placed on the surface. The water rises through the hole, and when it has reached a height marked by a line previously adjusted astronomically, the *ghurree allee*, or watch-

man, strikes the *ghurree* with a wooden mallet on a pan of bell-metal. At the end of each watch, the number of the *puhur* is rung as well as that of the *ghurree*. This instrument is likewise employed in astronomical observations; but in that case it must be adjusted with great care and precision.

The *ghurree al*, or water-clock just described, is an article of luxury, which none but the wealthy can afford, as it requires the attendance of numerous servants. There are no public clocks in Hindoostan, excepting those attached to the armies.

GEOGRAPHICAL SYSTEMS.

The geographical systems of the Hindoos are extremely curious, though involved in considerable obscurity, owing we know not whether to the exuberance or the poverty of their imagination, which delights in describing mountains of precious stones, seas of milk, rivers of honey and butter; and which has given to the world so perfect an equilibrium, that for every mountain in the south there is a corresponding mountain in the north, and that not a river can flow into the sea without having a

sister stream running in an opposite direction.

Notwithstanding these fanciful speculations, it cannot be denied that the Hindoos, though at the first view they appear to have been entirely separated from the rest of the world, had tolerably accurate general notions respecting the old continent. These they no doubt derived from the communications of the traders who were drawn to Hindoostan by its rich productions and the excellence of its manufactures, and of such of their countrymen as travelled into foreign countries with their merchandize.

Their geographical systems differ considerably from one another; but

most of them agree in dividing the earth into seven *dwipa*, or islands, the first of which, *Jambhu dwipa*, is bounded on the east by the Yellow Sea, and on the west by the Caspian, extends northward to the Frozen Ocean, and is washed on the south by the Indian Sea. Jambhu dwipa is therefore evidently India itself with the surrounding countries.

Mount Meru occupies the centre of this island. According to the poets it is composed of gold and precious stones, has three peaks, and is the habitation of the immortals. From this mountain spring four rivers, which run towards the four cardinal points. The Ganges, which is one of them, pursues its course

to the south: its source makes us acquainted with the real situation of Meru, which is in a tract of Western Tartary, having Thibet on the south, the sandy desert of Cobi on the east, Mount Imaus on the west, and the mountains of Altai on the north. From the four extremities of this elevated plain four of the largest rivers of the old continent take their rise.

Major Wilford supposes that the other six *dwipa* comprehend the rest of Asia and Europe in the following manner:—*Cusa dwipa* contains the countries extending from the Indus to the Caspian Sea and Persian Gulf; *Placsha dwipa*, the space between those seas, the Mediterranean and the Euxine, that

is to say, Asia Minor, Armenia, Syria, &c.; *Salmali dwipa* stretches from the Tanais to Germany; *Crauncha dwipa* comprises Germany, France and the adjacent countries; *Sacam*, the British islands, and *Puschcara dwipa* Iceland.

We have already alluded (in the Preface to the first volume) to the conviction entertained by the gentleman just mentioned that the British islands are the Sacred Isles of the West mentioned in the Sastras of the Hindoos: and we cordially agree in the sentiment expressed by Mrs. Graham on this subject, that "should even this opinion prove to be unfounded, no one will regret that Major Wilford has been induced to en-

tertain it, since the researches in which he engaged in order to support it, have made us acquainted with the geographical systems of the Hindoos, and with the true situations of almost all the kingdoms and cities mentioned by ancient writers, whose descriptions are thus verified and new confirmations added to history."

The *Puranas* are the most important of the works that treat of the geography of the Hindoos. To each of them is annexed a book, called *Bhuvana Cosha*, or Geographical Dictionary. Major Wilford mentions several other treatises composed either by orthodox Hindoos or by sectaries.

The Hindoos, as before stated, believe that Mount Meru is the centre of the world, and according to some of their books the seven *dwipa* are disposed in concentric circles round the mountain, gradually descending from its summit, and separated from one another by seas, some of salt, others of milk, and others again of juice of the sugar-cane. The Hindoos suppose that their sacred river forms the seven isles by turning round the base of Meru, as the fictions of the western mythologists made the Styx wind nine times round the earth.

The four rivers of the Hindoos, into which the Ganges divides after encir-

cling Meru, are discharged from rocks having the faces of different animals. The Ganges issues from the mouth of a cow, and its waters are collected in the lake Mana-Sarovara, to rest after their fall from Meru, before they descend to the earth. This lake, usually called Mapanh, is situated between the 33d and 34th degree of north latitude, and between the 81st and 82d of east longitude. The Chaku, the Sita and the Bhadra, the three other rivers, likewise flow from the heads of animals; the first from that of a horse; the second from that of an elephant; and the third from that of a lion. These different animals are supposed to have im-

parted their respective characters to the people of the countries watered by these rivers, after they have rested in their appropriate lakes.

MORALISTS.

The Hindoos are in no want of works on morals. Malabar alone boasts, like Greece of old, of having produced seven sages: but a still more extraordinary circumstance is, that they were all of one family, and that four of them were females.

One of the latter, the celebrated Avyar, was one of the most ancient philosophers of Malabar. Her works contain excellent general ideas on science and morals. Her origin and birth, as well as the period in which she flourished, are involved in the obscurity

of fable. Some assert that she was one of the wives of Brama, who had banished her from heaven for some fault which she had committed. Being thus doomed to live upon earth till the accomplishment of her penance, she composed moral works for the benefit of mankind and particularly of youth.

Others give the following account of the birth of Avyar, and of the six other sages, her brothers and sisters.

Perali, their father, and Vedamoli, their grandfather, belonging to the caste of the Bramins, were eminent saints and philosophers. The latter in a vision beheld a star descend upon a village inhabited by Pooleahs, and fall on a house in which a female infant had just

been born. Vedamoli had, on account of the sanctity of his life, been favoured by heaven with the privilege of foreseeing future events, and thus knew that this child was destined to become the wife of his son Perali, then only twelve years of age.

Deeply distressed by this discovery, he assembled the Bramins and acquainted them with his anxiety, but said not a word about the marriage with which his son was threatened, as that would have been quite sufficient to occasion his immediate exclusion from the caste; merely telling them in general terms, that this new-born infant was destined to bring numberless calamities on the caste of the Bramins.

Alarmed by this sinister prediction, the Bramins deliberated what to do with the child. They sent for the father, disclosed to him the fatal destiny of the infant, and inquired if he would not consent to sacrifice her to save the revered caste of the Bramins from the misfortunes which otherwise impended over them. The poor man submissively replied, that he placed the fate of his daughter in their hands, and that they might dispose of her as they pleased.

The infant was brought, and her death was unanimously decreed by all but Vedamoli. He alone refused to sanction this barbarous resolution, and proposed, instead of putting the infant to death, to send her to some distant

country and there abandon her to her fate. The other Brahmins, having assented to this plan, put the infant into a basket and exposed her on the sacred river Cavery, where they left her to the care of Providence.

The old prophet had meanwhile directed his son to go and examine the child, and to see whether he could discover any mark about her body by which she might be known. Perali returned and informed him that she had a very distinct black spot on one thigh. This affair soon ceased to be thought of, and the old man died without ever making any farther allusion to this subject.

While the poor little nayad was thus

floating down the Cavery, a Bramin, on the bank of the river, performing the ablutions prescribed by his religion and other customary ceremonies, espied the basket. Instead of finding it filled with valuables as he expected, there was nothing in it but a new-born female infant, who, when he looked at her, smiled engagingly in his face. He had no children, for which he had often addressed earnest prayers to heaven, and he was now convinced that his god had granted his request. He therefore took the child home, provided for her, and determined to bring her up as his own daughter.

Meanwhile, young Perali, who had already made some progress in the study

of philosophy and religion, resolved to travel, as his father had done, with a view to improve himself, and to visit the sacred cities, for the purpose of conversing with holy persons and celebrated philosophers.

During his travels, chance conducted him to the abode of the Bramin who had adopted the exposed infant. This holy man, deeply sensible of Perali's merits, kept him some years at his house and gave him the girl, who was universally considered in the neighbourhood as his own child, in marriage.

Perali lived happily for some time with his wife, till the latter, returning from the performance of some religious duties, changed her dress in his pre-

sence. He was thunderstruck on perceiving the black spot which he had not forgotten, and which acquainted him with her low extraction. Concealing his mortification, he went and inquired of the other Bramins how his father-in-law had come by the girl who passed for his daughter; and the information he obtained left no room to doubt her identity.

He was at first tempted to load his benefactor with reproaches for having led him into so unworthy a match: but he was deterred by the fear of appearing ungrateful; and resolving to lock up the fatal secret within his own bosom, he quitted the house without taking leave of any one, or saying a single

word either to the Bramin or to his wife.

Both were greatly alarmed at his sudden departure. The father-in-law, thinking that his daughter might have given her husband some cause of displeasure, ordered her to hasten after him and bring him back; but if she could not persuade him to return, to follow him wherever he might go.

The young wife obeyed, and was not long before she overtook her husband: but all her endeavours to prevail on him to return to her father's house were ineffectual. Perali was inflexible: without saying a single word in reply, he set off in all possible haste, and strove to get away from her. She nevertheless

continued to follow him, stopping every night at the choultries where he lodged, and cherishing the hope that she should finally induce him to change his resolution.

After some days, Perali, weary of her importunities, availed himself of the opportunity while she was asleep to quit the choultry, and thus rid himself of her. It is impossible to describe the anguish she felt next morning on awaking, to find herself a second time forsaken and alone in the wide world.

She knew not what to do, nor whither to go; for she durst not return to her father, whose commands she was determined strictly to obey, and who would no doubt have given her but an

indifferent reception, had she returned without her husband. In this forlorn state, she wandered for some time about the village, sighing and weeping. A Bramin, pitying her situation, inquired the cause of her distress: she related all the circumstances of her unfortunate case, as far, at least, as she was herself acquainted with them; for she knew no other than that she was the daughter of the Bramin who had brought her up. Moved by her story, the stranger took her home with him, and promised to provide for her as though she were his own child.

She soon won the affections of the whole family, and especially of the daughters of her adoptive father, who

treated her as their sister. The holy man, at his death, allotted to her an equal share of his property with them.

This bequest was sufficient to enable her to build a choultry, where she spent her time in the practice of the duties of piety and hospitality, receiving pilgrims and other religious travellers who came to pass the night there, and supplying them with rice, milk, fruit, and whatever she could afford. At the same time, with a view to her own improvement in philosophy and virtue, she solicited their advice, and begged them to relate to her the circumstances of their lives. She, for her part, took pleasure in narrating her own adventures to amuse and entertain them.

This kind of life she had led for several years, when one day a pilgrim stopped at her choultry. She gave him the same cheerful welcome as she did to all travellers who applied for hospitality. When she had related her adventures, he was surprised to recognise his wife in so pious a female.

He admired her virtue and her fidelity; and that he might not betray his emotion, he pretended to fall asleep during her narrative, but passed the whole night in extreme agitation. Next morning he rose very early, took his staff and his little bundle, and set off without saying a word.

The mistress of the choultry was greatly surprised at his behaviour. Fear-

ful lest she had unintentionally done something to offend him, she hastened after him, and asked why he left her thus without speaking, and what was the cause of the uneasiness which he manifested at the sight of her. "How," said she, "can I have displeased you? If I have given you cause of offence, you must forgive me, for I had no intention to do so. Alas! you leave me exactly in the same manner as my husband, when I was forsaken by him!"

At these words, Perali could no longer contain himself. Throwing down his bundle and the earthen vessels which he carried, he clasped her in his arms, exclaiming: "I am that husband, and thou art my wife. If I forsook thee,

it was not because I had any fault to find with thee; but I was compelled to act as I did by religious motives. Since thou hast been so virtuous and so constant, I will take thee with me; but on this condition, that thou shalt do all I enjoin thee without inquiring the reason." Surprised and delighted with this happy explanation, she promised to obey implicitly all his commands.

From this time Perali took her with him in all his travels. She bore him seven children, who were the seven sages mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. Perali ordered his wife to expose these infants in the woods, and to leave them to the care of Providence. She kept her promise and obeyed,

though with great repugnance. The little creatures, who at their birth were endowed with speech and wisdom, strove to comfort their mother when she took leave of them with a shower of tears. "God," said one of them, "who formed me, and who supported and caused me to grow so miraculously till the day I was born, will not forsake me: place thy trust in him, and despair not of his mercy." The second addressed her in these words:—"God, who provides subsistence for the meanest insect, will not abandon me. Why, then, be uneasy about me? Go, mother, and be of good cheer."—The other five, when their turns came, held nearly the same language, and manifested from

their birth equal wisdom and confidence in the deity.

Neither were they forsaken by the Almighty. He sent into the woods, in which they were exposed, charitable persons of all classes, who carried them away, fed them, and supplied all their wants. The first was adopted by a rajah, the second by a washerman, the third by a philosophic poet, the fourth by an artisan, the fifth by a basket-maker, the sixth by a Bramin, and the last by a Pooleah. Avyar, to whose works we have alluded, fell to the share of the poet, who gave her an excellent education. She is supposed to have flourished about the time of the famous kings Cholen, Cheron, and Pandien, or

about the ninth century of the christian era.

Besides other sciences, Avyar was acquainted with chemistry, in which she became such an adept as to discover the secret of making gold, a universal medicine, and the celebrated *calpan*, whose virtues enabled her to prolong her life to the age of two hundred and forty years. This fabulous story is variously related in the ancient works of the Malabar writers.

The works of Avyar, still extant, are short treatises of morality, intituled *Atisoodi, Konnewenden, Moodoorci, Nadwali*, and *Kalvi-Olookham*. They consist of moral sentences, arranged in the order of the letters of the Malabar al-

phabet; so that these little books might aptly be styled the golden alphabet of Malabar. Boys at school learn to read by them, but without understanding their meaning, which the master himself scarcely comprehends; for they are very obscure, and it is said that there are few sentences in them but are susceptible of five different interpretations. Some, however, are very clear, and cannot be explained in more than one way.

We cannot forbear transcribing a few of these sentences: they may not have much novelty for the reader; but when he considers that they were written nearly a thousand years ago by a Hindoo female, they will regard this as one

more proof, in addition to the many others, that morality, which is the same in all ages and among all nations, is not a human invention, but that its principles are engraven in the hearts of all men by God himself.

Sentences extracted from the ATISOODI.

Honour thy father and mother.

Never forget the favours which thou hast received.

Learn while thou art young.

Obey the laws of thy country.

Seek the society of the virtuous.

Speak not of God but with reverence.

Live in harmony with thy fellow-citizens.

Remain in thy place.

Speak ill of no one.

Never ridicule bodily infirmities.

Pursue not a vanquished enemy.

Endeavour to acquire a good reputation.

The sweetest bread is that earned by labour.

Take advice of the wise.

From the KALVI-OLOOKHAM.

The more you learn the more easy you find it to learn.

Knowledge is the most lasting wealth.

Thou mightest as well be dumb as ignorant.

The genuine object of science is to distinguish good from evil.

Give not thy parents reason to be ashamed of thee.

What a person learns in his youth is as durable as that which is engraven on stone.

The wise man is he who knows himself.

Let thy books be thy best friends.

Though thou mayst be a hundred years old still strive to learn.

Deceive none, not even thine enemy.

Wisdom is a treasure which is every where worth its price.

From the KONNEWENDEN.

Modesty is the fairest ornament of a woman.

A person is not comfortably lodged but at home.

Speak kindly even to the poor.

Forgiveness is sweeter than revenge.

The greatest ornament to a family is harmony.

First procure a plough, and then look after the oxen.

Gambling and discord lead to misery.

There is no real merit without the practice of virtue.

To honour thy mother is the most acceptable worship thou canst pay to the deity.

There is no tranquil sleep without a good conscience.

A man has not always milk to drink; he should therefore know how to adapt himself to circumstances.

He misconceives his interest who violates his promise.

There is no virtue without religion.

The ancient works of the Hindoos, both poems and dramas, inculcate a morality founded on active disinterested virtue. In Sacontala, for instance, the Bramin, Sarngarava beautifully observes when speaking of the king:— "This is what we wished; yet we have no private interest in the business. It is ever thus: the trees are bent by the abundance of their fruit: clouds

are brought low when they teem with salubrious rain; and the real benefactors of mankind are not elated by riches."

In like manner, at the commencement of the piece the hermit says to Dushmanta: "The weapons of you kings and warriors are destined for the relief of the oppressed, not for the destruction of the guiltless."

When Sacontala, on leaving her home bursts into tears, her foster-father strives to cheer her spirits with this exhortation:—"When the big tear lurks beneath thy beautiful eyelashes, let thy resolution check its first efforts to disengage itself.—In thy passage over this earth, where the paths are now high now low, and the

true path seldom distinguished, the traces of thy feet must needs be unequal; but virtue will press thee right onward."

Admirable lessons for the conduct of life are also to be found in the poem called Mahabharat. The suppression of selfishness and the aspiring to the rewards of virtue are particularly inculcated. "Blessed is the man," it is there said, "who has subdued all his passions, and then performs with energy the duties of life unconcerned respecting the result. Let the motive lie in the act and not in the issue of it. Be not one of those whose motives for acting are the hopes of recompence. Let not thy life be passed in indolence.

Be industrious; do thy duty; banish all thoughts of the consequence and result, whether it be good or ill. Seek a refuge in wisdom; for the miserable and the unhappy are rendered so merely by circumstances. The genuine sage concerns himself not about the good or evil in this world. Strive therefore to attain such a use of thy reason, for it is the most valuable science in life."

These sublime lessons of morality have an intimate connection with religion, from which indeed they may be said to spring.

POETRY

AND

DRAMATIC WORKS.

The Hindoos, like all ancient nations, disguised almost every thing in allegory and poetry. Their very legislation forms no exception to the general practice, for the code of Menu is a poem. Portions of their history are in like manner blended with poetic fictions, into which moral precepts are always interwoven. Their whole system of religion and cosmogony is also given in a series of poetic pictures abounding

with the richest and most fanciful imagery.

Dramatic poetry, says Sir William Jones, in his preface to Sacontala, must have been immemorially ancient in the Indian empire: the invention of it is commonly ascribed to Bheret, a sage believed to have been inspired, who invented also a system of music which bears his name; but this opinion of its origin is rendered very doubtful by the universal belief that the first Sanscrit verse ever heard by mortals was pronounced in a burst of resentment by the great Valmic, who flourished in the silver age of the world, and was author of an epic poem on the war of his contemporary, Rama, King of Ayodhya.

This poem intituled, *Ramayuna*, has been printed at Serampore, accompanied with a literal translation by the missionaries Carey and Marshman. In its general subject it agrees with the history of Rama, a sketch of whose adventures, as one of the incarnations of Vishnu, has been given in the first volume. Rama was really the sovereign of Oude, and Valmic, who has immortalised his exploits, lived at the court of this monarch who reigned, according to Major Wilford, about 1500 years before Christ.

The *Mahabharat*, another great historical poem, is one of the chief productions of Vyasa, who is said to have compiled the Puranas. It is considered

by the Bramins as a classic and indeed sacred work, to which they ascribe an antiquity of above three thousand years. It is a mythological heroic poem describing the adventures of the hero Crishna and the great wars which distracted India in the fourteenth century before Christ, and which introduced some very important changes into the religion of the Hindoos. A portion of that part of this poem called the *Bhagavat* has been translated by Mr. Wilkins. This part Warren Hastings characterises as a work scarcely to be paralleled for sublimity of conception, argument and diction.

As a specimen of the manner we subjoin a strophe or rather one of the

episodes relative to the civil war between the members of the family of Bharat. The two armies have advanced against one another with the intention of giving battle. Orioon, or Arjoon, the leader of one party, whom the god Crishna (the Apollo of the Greeks) has taken under his especial protection, is represented as surveying the two armies from his war-chariot, previously to the conflict.

" The prince looked around, and there stood sires and grandsires, farther on uncles and brothers, sons and grandsons ; and here and there relatives and friends of the two armies. When Koondee's son beheld men thus allied by blood drawn up in array against

each other, profound grief filled his heart and he vented his lamentations in these words:—'When, O Crishna! I survey all these friends standing in hostile array, impatient for the combat, my limbs are unnerved, the paleness of death overspreads my countenance, horror thrills my whole frame, and my hair stands erect. Gandiva (the bow of Orioon) drops from my hand, I can support myself no longer and my wavering senses forsake me. All around me I discover nought but unpropitious omens, O Keshava;* nor can I perceive that any good can arise from the slaugh-

* A surname of Crishna, which signifies, with beautiful hair.

ter of kinsmen in battle. Even though they would destroy me, I desire not to slay them. O thou divine one! not for the dominion of the three worlds would I do it, much less for that of this earth alone. How should we ever be happy, Madheva, after imbruing our hands in the blood of our kindred? Into what guilt, alas! are we about to plunge, we whom the lust of rule incites to exterminate the race of our friends! Rather would I be myself slain unarmed and unavenged, or even armed, in battle, by the host of Dhritarashtra!"

These generous sentiments Crishna endeavours to stifle in the bosom of the

prince by the doctrines of the Hindoos respecting the incessant transformations of all beings.

"Cease thy groundless lamentations;" says the god, "he who thinks wisely weeps not either for those that go or for them who are left . . . . . know that that whereby this universe subsists cannot be annihilated; nor can any one destroy what is of immortal essence. These frail bodies are but the tabernacles of the Eternal, whom none can annihilate or measure: arise then and fight, son of Bherat!—insensate the man who imagines that this slays or is to be slain: it can neither kill nor die."

Indian genius has launched forth into still bolder flights in those passages of

their poems which relate either to the Supreme Being, or the creation of the world. Such is the following from the Rijveda, called *Aitareya Aranyaca*, the four last lectures of which, containing a truly sublime account of the creation have been translated by Mr. Colebrooke, in his essay on the Vedas, inserted in the eighth volume of the *Asiatic Researches*:—

"Originally this universe was soil only; nothing else whatever existed, active or inactive. He thought I will create worlds; water, light, mortal beings and the waters. That water is the region above the heaven, which heaven upholds; the atmosphere comprises light, the earth is mortal; and

the regions below are the waters . . . . . What is this soul, that we may worship him? This soul is Brama; he is Indra; he is Prajapati, the lord of creatures: these gods are he, and so are the five primary elements, earth, air, the etherial fluid, water and light; these and the same joined with minute objects and other seeds of existence, and again other beings produced from eggs, or borne in wombs, or originating in hot moisture, or springing from plants; whether horses, or kine, or men, or elephants, whatever lives and walks, or flies, or whatever is immoveable, as trees and herbs: all that is the eye of intelligence. On intellect

every thing is founded. Intelligence is Brama, the great one."

A hymn on the same subject in another part of the Rijeveda concludes thus :—

"Who knows exactly, and who shall in this world declare, whence and why this creation took place? The gods are subsequent to the production of this world; then who can know whence it proceeded, or whence this varied world arose, or whether it upholds itself or not? He who is in the highest heaven, the ruler of this universe, does indeed know, but not another can possess that knowledge."

Next to the two great poems which

we have noticed, and which are regarded as sacred by the Hindoos, may be placed the epic poem of Megha, intituled *Sisupala Badha*, the subject of which is the death of Sisupala, slain by Crishna; the *Ciratarjunya* of Bharavi, which contains the history of the journey and penance of the hero Arjuna on the mountain of Keiladree, to obtain celestial weapons for the purpose of employing them against the King Duryodhana; the *Naishadhya* of Sriharsha, esteemed one of the most beautiful poems in the language, describing the marriage and misfortunes of Nala, king of Nishada, who lost his throne and his wife Damayanti, through the

artifices of Cali, but recovered both after a variety of adventures.

The poetical works of Calidas are also held in high estimation, and especially the *Meghaduta*, the *Cumara* and the *Raghu*. These with the three above mentioned are the six masterpieces of Hindoo poetry. The Meghaduta consists of no more than one hundred and sixteen stanzas, but the extreme elegance, delicacy and tenderness of the sentiments expressed in it have acquired it this high rank among the ancient poetical productions of India.

Respecting the origin of their dramatic poetry, the Hindoos have a tradi-

tion, that the first regular play, on the same subject with the Ramayuna, was composed by Hanooman or Pavan, who commanded an army of satyrs, or mountaineers, in Rama's expedition against Lanca: they add, that he engraved it on a smooth rock, which, being dissatisfied with his composition, he hurled into the sea; and that many years afterwards, a learned prince ordered expert divers to take impressions of the poem on wax, by which the drama was in great measure restored.

By whomsoever or in whatever age this species of entertainment was invented, it is very certain that it was carried to great perfection in its kind, when Vicramaditya, who reigned in the

first century before Christ, gave encouragement to poets, philologers and mathematicians. At a time when the Britons were as unlettered and as unpolished as the army of Hanooman, nine men of genius, commonly called the nine gems, attended his court and were splendidly supported by his bounty, and Calidas is unanimously allowed to have been the brightest of them.

Some of his contemporaries and other Hindoo poets even to our own times, have composed so many tragedies, comedies, farces and musical pieces that the Indian theatre would fill as many volumes as that of any nation in ancient or modern Europe. Those held in the highest estimation,

and the most admired after the productions of Calidas, amounting to between thirty and forty pieces, are all in verse where the dialogue is elevated, and in prose where it is familiar. The men of rank and learning are represented speaking pure Sanscrit, and the women Pracrit, which is little more than the language of the Bramins melted down by a delicate articulation to the softness of Italian; while the low persons of the drama speak the vulgar dialects of the several provinces which they are supposed to inhabit.

These pieces are not confined to a single action of the life of a hero, but frequently comprise his whole history. The representation, therefore, instead

of occupying two or three hours, as with us, lasts two or three nights; the actors resuming each time, where they left off the preceding night.

The actors, in Malabar called *calicaren*, are in general Nairs, who perform for their amusement. The representation takes place at night and in the open air: the stage is lighted by a great number of lamps, and the actors have two or three boxes to which they can retire, to change their dresses and for other purposes when not on the stage. The spectators of both sexes squat about in the dark here and there wherever they please.

One of the best and most favourite dramas of the Hindoos is *Sacontala, or*

the Fatal Ring, by Calidas, who is called by its translator, Sir William Jones, "the Shakspeare of India." Herder, a competent judge of the beauties of antiquity, has exquisitely characterised this drama, of which observes: "All its scenes are bound together with wreaths of flowers; and each of them arises naturally from the subject like a beautiful plant. We here meet with a great number of sublime as well as tender conceptions, for which we should look in vain in the works of the Greek dramatists; for the genius of Indian nature itself has breathed them into the country, the nation and the poet."

The plan of this piece, indeed, is ex-

tremely simple, and in that respect it will not sustain a comparison with the productions of the Greek or of modern dramatists. Here are no intricate knots, no deep-laid intrigues; or at least whatever might be considered as such belongs to the supernatural. As the Orientals believe all nature to be peopled with beings of a higher order, who exercise an influence over man, and according to the notions of the Hindoos, every tree and plant is moreover animated, every thing must of course conform to these hypotheses: but on the other hand, pure, simple, unsophisticated nature pervades the whole.

Sacontala, the daughter of Causica, a sage and monarch, and of a supernatural

female, a fairy or nymph, has been educated by a venerable Bramin in a sacred grove inhabited by holy hermits. This place is visited by Dushmanta, emperor of India, while hunting in the forest. Out of respect for the sacred grove, he sends back his charioteer and enters it alone. Here he meets with Sacontala, with whose beauty he is deeply smitten, and who, in the absence of her foster-father, duly performs the rites of hospitality. The stranger wins the heart of the princess, and they contract a marriage in the presence of her two female attendants alone. Dusmantha, being called to his capital, at his departure gives Sacontala a ring in token of their union. Her foster-father,

on his return, knowing from inspiration what had passed in his absence, sends his ward accompanied by trusty persons to the court of Dusmantha.

After the departure of the king it happens that Sacontala being absorbed in grief, and not attending to the request of a Bramin who solicits hospitality, the incensed priest retires, pronouncing a malediction upon her and wishing that she may be forgotten by the person of whom she is thinking. Her companions alone hear the imprecation and run after the Bramin entreating him to recal it; but it is too late: all they can obtain is that the King should recollect his wife on seeing the ring which he has given her. They

dare not acquaint her with the imprecation of the Bramin, but remind her at parting of her ring, recommending to her to show it to the king if by any accident he should not at once recollect her.

Unfortunately the princess, in performing the ablutions prescribed by religion, drops her ring in the water and pursues her journey without perceiving her loss. Followed by the malediction of the Bramin, a malediction which never fails to take effect, she arrives at the young king's court. He treats her as an utter stranger, and when she claims him as her husband, insists that she must be the wife of another. Wounded to the heart by this reception,

Sacontala is caught up in a cloud and conveyed to the court of Casyapa, the father of the immortals, where she gives birth to her son Bharata.

The fatal ring, marked with Dusmantha's name, is meanwhile found by a fisherman in the belly of a fish, and carried to the monarch. At the sight of this talisman he remembers Sacontala and bitterly deplores her loss. He shuns both business and pleasure, till the gods require his assistance against the dæmons. Having afforded them his aid, he repairs to the court of Casyapa, where he meets with Sacontala and her son. He recognizes his wife, an explanation ensues, and they return happy to the earth.

We subjoin a few passages from this drama in justification of the high encomiums which have been passed upon it.

When Dushmanta has first seen Sacontala in the sacred grove of the hermits, and his Bramin, his ordinary attendant, (who also acts a part similar to that of a court-fool or jester, and frequently drops very apt truths) asks with some surprize, how the king can admire a rustic girl so inferior in rank to himself, he draws this picture of her.

Dushmanta. When I meditate on the power of Brama, and on her lineaments, the creation of so transcendent a jewel outshines, in my apprehension, all his other works: she was formed and

moulded in the eternal mind, which had raised with its utmost exertion the ideas of perfect shapes, and thence made an assemblage of all abstract beauties.

Madhavya. She must render then all other handsome women contemptible.

Dushm. In my mind she really does. I know not yet what blessed inhabitant of this world will be the possessor of that faultless beauty, which now resembles a blossom whose fragrance has not been diffused; a fresh leaf which no hand has torn from its stalk; a pure diamond, which no polisher has handled; new honey, whose sweetness is yet untasted; or rather the celestial fruit of collected virtues, to the perfection of which nothing can be added.

With what energy and beauty the king expresses his passion!

"O God of Love, how can thy darts be so keen, since they are pointed with flowers?—Yes, I discover the reason of their keenness. They are tipped with the flames which the wrath of Hara [Sheeva] kindled, and which blaze at this moment like the Barava fire under the waves: how else couldst thou, who wast consumed even to ashes, be still the inflamer of our souls? By thee and by the moon, though each of you seems worthy of confidence, we lovers are cruelly deceived. They who love as I do ascribe flowery shafts to thee, and cool beams to the moon, with equal impropriety; for the moon sheds fire

on them with her dewy rays, and thou pointest with sharp diamonds those arrows which seem to be barbed with blossoms."

If the rest of this act, in which Sacontala herself appears, and the king declares his passion to her were not too long, it would be peculiarly deserving of a place here, on account of the exquisite tenderness and the purest innocence displayed by Sacontala.

How touching, too, is the scene in which Sacontala takes leave of her venerable foster-father, Canna! The very plants and animals of the forest participate in the pain of parting. On this occasion, Priyamvada, one of her companions, says to her :—

You lament not alone.—Mark the affliction of the forest itself, when the time of your departure approaches! The female antelope (Sacontala's favourite) browses no more on the collected *cusa* grass; and the pea-hen ceases to dance on the lawn: the very plants of the grove, whose pale leaves fall on the ground, lose their strength and their beauty.

Sacontala (to her father). Venerable father, suffer me to address this Madhavi creeper, whose red blossoms inflame the grove.

Canna. My child, I know thy affection for it.

Sacont. (embracing the plant). O most radiant of twining plants, receive

my embraces, and return them with thy flexible arms: from this day, though removed to a fatal distance, I shall forever be thine. O beloved father, consider this creeper as myself.

Just before, Canna, apostrophizing the trees of the forest, describes Sacontala as "she who drank not, though thirsty, before you were watered; she who cropped not, through affection for you, one of your fresh leaves, though she would have been pleased with such an ornament for her locks; she whose delight was in the season when your branches were spangled with flowers."

How beautiful, and how appropriate to the climate, is the description of the morning's dawn in the same act! One

of the hermits, ordered by their superior, Canna, to observe the time of the night, thus speaks:—

"The moon has now disappeared, and the night-flower pleases no more: it leaves only a remembrance of its odour, and languishes like a tender bride, whose pain is intolerable in the absence of her beloved. The ruddy morning impurples the dew-drops of yonder *vadari;* the peacock, shaking off sleep, hastens from the cottages of hermits interwoven with holy grass; and yonder antelope, springing hastily from the place of sacrifice, which is marked with his hoofs, raises himself on high, and stretches his graceful limbs.—How is the moon fallen from the sky

with diminished beams! the moon who had set his foot on the head of Sumeni, king of mountains, and had climbed, scattering the rear of darkness, even to the central palace of Vishnu!—Thus do the great men of this world ascend with extreme labour to the summit of ambition, but easily and quickly descend from it."

We shall swell these extracts, already perhaps too copious, with but one more, the striking picture of the earth, a real panorama, drawn by the king exalted above the clouds in the car of the god Indra:—

"Through the rapid, yet imperceptible descent of the heavenly steeds, I now perceive the allotted station of

men.—Astonishing prospect! It is yet so distant from us, that the low lands appear confounded with the high mountain tops: the trees erect their branchy shoulders, but seem leafless; the rivers look like bright lines, but their waters vanish; and at this instant the globe of earth seems thrown upward by some stupendous power."

Giajadeva is the favourite lyric poet of Hindoostan. His odes, intituled Ghitagovinda, which are full of grand and beautiful images, have been translated into English by the elegant pen of Sir William Jones; who acknowledges that he has been obliged to soften the original, and to alter certain figures, the

boldness of which he despaired of transferring into our language.

The amatory poetry of the Hindoos is not deficient in delicacy of ideas or of expression; but the sentiments, though clothed in elegant language, are too simple and too little refined for our western taste. The Hindoos have, like ourselves, a species of composition which they call *champu*, and which is a mixture of prose and verse resembling the History of the Civil Wars of Grenada, in the Spanish; and the simple and pathetic ballads, many of which have of late years been translated from that language.

The *Hitopadesa* is a collection of

fables which the Orientals consider as an invaluable store of moral and political precepts. Indeed the invention of fables is claimed for the Hindoos by the Arabic writer, Alsefadi. This collection, by Vishnuserman, whom the western writers have ridiculously called Pilpay, is probably the most ancient that exists, and no doubt furnished the ground-work of the fables so well known by the name of Esop. The *Hitopadesa*, which signifies *friendly instruction*, was not translated till the sixth century of our era from the Sanscrit, at the cost of the physician of the caliph Nushirvan. Versions of it were afterwards made in more than twenty languages; and at length these fables,

with various alterations and additions, found their way into Europe, where they were circulated under the name of Pilpay and Esop. We are indebted for an English translation of them to the elegant pen of Mr. Wilkins. A specimen of these fables is subjoined.

THE LION AND THE YOUNG HARE.

Cunning may make amends for want of strength.

A hungry lion once devoured all the beasts that fell in his way. To put an end to this perpetual havoc, the other animals offered to furnish him every day with some beast or other for his subsistence. The proposal was accepted, and the contract faithfully performed

on both sides. At length it came to the turn of a young hare, the craftiest creature of all his race. He purposely delayed his departure, and thus arrived an hour later than the stipulated time. The lion inquired the cause of this delay. "Please your majesty," said the hare, "I was stopped by another lion, who threatened you and all your subjects with destruction."—"Conduct me immediately to this audacious adversary," rejoined the enraged lion. The hare accordingly led him to the brink of a deep, pellucid well, in which the lion beheld his own figure, and taking it for his antagonist, plunged in and was drowned.

Several others of these fables are evi-

dently the same with some in Esop and Phædrus, with slight alterations. Thus, for instance, an elephant is caught in the net of a hunter, and delivered by rats, whom he had previously set at liberty, and who gnaw in pieces the meshes of the net. Substitute the lion for the elephant, and this fable is precisely the same as Esop's.

Upon the whole it seems highly probable, as Mrs. Graham remarks, that if we knew a little more of the native tales of India, we might trace the sources whence many of the early romances of Europe came to us through the Arabs and Moors, and possibly also the origin of some of the Norse and Scaldic fables.

PAINTING AND SCULPTURE.

We find nothing in Hindoo works to enable us to judge of the state of painting at the time when Hindoostan was in the zenith of its glory. All the ancient pictures are destroyed; and it is only incidental passages in books not expressly relating to that art which lead us to conjecture, that it had formerly arrived at a certain degree of perfection.

The *mutchees*, or painters, of the present day, understand nothing of perspective, light and shade, or chiaroscuro; but their performances are re-

markable for colouring: indeed we know of no colours equal to those of Hindoostan.

On the subject of sculpture we have little to add to the observations introduced into a preceding volume, when treating of the ancient pagodas of this country. For the following remarks we are indebted to Mrs. Graham.

Sculpture had made considerable progress in Hindoostan at an early period. The first figures of the ancient Egyptians and even of the Greeks had their hands straight and attached to the body; and their legs were not divided. The Hindoos had attained to an imitation of attitude and action, and though their forms wanted that exquisite grace which

even now enraptures us in viewing the wonders of the Grecian chisel, some of them are not without elegance. Perhaps one great reason of the check to the farther progress of sculpture was the necessity, presumed by the artists, for representing by gigantic bulk the greatness of their heroes and gods. It is also probable that the Hindoo sculptors could not, even for the sake of improvement, deviate from the figure and attitude originally given them by his ancestors.

In the lower department of sculpture, which embraces architectural ornaments, the Hindoo chisel has perhaps seldom been surpassed. Its light and airy foliage, its elegant volutes, and the

variety of its subjects, vie at once with Italian art and Gothic fancy, to which last style it bears indeed occasionally a remarkable resemblance.

END OF VOL. V.

GREEN, LEICESTER STREET, LEICESTER SQUARE.