

*SIR WILLIAM JONES.*

THE  
WORKS  
OF  
SIR WILLIAM JONES.

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WITH  
THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR,  
BY  
LORD TEIGNMOUTH.

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IN THIRTEEN VOLUMES.

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VOLUME III.

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LONDON:

PRINTED FOR JOHN STOCKDALE, PICCADILLY;  
AND JOHN WALKER, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

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1807.

17454.27



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Printed by T. DAVISON,  
Whitefriars.

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## THE THIRD VOLUME.

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A

## DISCOURSE, &c.

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GENTLEMEN,

IF I had consulted my competency only, for the station which your choice has conferred upon me, I must without hesitation have declined the honour of being the President of this Society; and although I most cheerfully accept your invitation, with every inclination to assist, as far as my abilities extend, in promoting the laudable views of your association, I must still retain the consciousness of those disqualifications, which you have been pleased to overlook.

It was lately our boast to possess a President, whose name, talents, and character, would have been honourable to any institution; it is now our misfortune to lament, that Sir William Jones exists, but in the affections of his friends, and in the esteem, veneration, and regret of all.

I cannot, I flatter myself, offer a more grateful tribute to the Society, than by making his character the subject of my first address to you;

and if in the delineation of it, fondness or affection for the man should appear blended with my reverence for his genius and abilities, in the sympathy of your feelings I shall find my apology.

To define with accuracy the variety, value, and extent of his literary attainments, requires more learning than I pretend to possess, and I am therefore to solicit your indulgence for an imperfect sketch, rather than expect your approbation for a complete description of the talents, and knowledge, of your late and lamented President.

I shall begin with mentioning his wonderful capacity for the acquisition of languages, which has never been excelled. In *Greek* and *Roman* literature, his early proficiency was the subject of admiration and applause; and knowledge, of whatever nature, once obtained by him, was ever afterwards progressive. The more elegant dialects of modern *Europe*, the *French*, the *Spanish*, and the *Italian*, he spoke and wrote with the greatest fluency and precision; and the *German* and *Portuguese* were familiar to him. At an early period of life his application to Oriental literature commenced; he studied the *Hebrew* with ease and success, and many of the most learned *Asiatics* have the candour to avow, that his knowledge of *Arabick* and *Persian* was as accurate and extensive as their own;

he was also conversant in the *Turkish* idiom, and the *Chinese* had even attracted his notice, so far as to induce him to learn the radical characters of that language, with a view perhaps to farther improvements. It was to be expected, after his arrival in *India*, that he would eagerly embrace the opportunity of making himself master of the *Sanscrit*; and the most enlightened professors of the doctrines of BRAHMA confess with pride, delight, and surprise, that his knowledge of their sacred dialect was most critically correct and profound. The *Pandits*, who were in the habit of attending him, when I saw them after his death, at a public *Durbar*, could neither suppress their tears for his loss, nor find terms to express their admiration at the wonderful progress he had made in their sciences.

Before the expiration of his twenty-second year, he had completed his Commentaries on the Poetry of the *Asiatics*, although a considerable time afterwards elapsed before their publication; and this work, if no other monument of his labours existed, would at once furnish proofs of his consummate skill in the Oriental dialects, of his proficiency in those of *Rome* and *Greece*, of taste and erudition far beyond his years, and of talents and application without example.

But the judgement of Sir William Jones was too discerning to consider language in any other light than as the key of science, and he would have despised the reputation of a mere linguist. Knowledge and truth, were the object of all his studies, and his ambition was to be useful to mankind; with these views, he extended his researches to all languages, nations, and times.

Such were the motives that induced him to propose to the Government of this country, what he justly denominated a work of national utility and importance, the compilation of a copious digest of *Hindu* and *Mahomedan* Law, from *Sanscrit* and *Arabick* originals, with an offer of his services to superintend the compilation, and with a promise to translate it. He had foreseen, previous to his departure from *Europe*, that without the aid of such a work, the wise and benevolent intentions of the legislature of *Great Britain*, in leaving, to a certain extent, the natives of these provinces in possession of their own laws, could not be completely fulfilled; and his experience, after a short residence in India, confirmed what his sagacity had anticipated, that without principles to refer to, in a language familiar to the judges of the courts, adjudications amongst the natives must too

often be subject to an uncertain and erroneous exposition, or wilful misinterpretation of their laws.

To the superintendance of this work, which was immediately undertaken at his suggestion, he assiduously devoted those hours which he could spare from his professional duties. After tracing the plan of the digest, he prescribed its arrangement and mode of execution, and selected from the most learned *Hindus* and *Mahommedans* fit persons for the task of compiling it; flattered by his attention, and encouraged by his applause, the *Pandits* prosecuted their labours with cheerful zeal, to a satisfactory conclusion. The *Mohavees* have also nearly finished their portion of the work, but we must ever regret, that the promised translation, as well as the meditated preliminary dissertation, have been frustrated by that decree, which so often intercepts the performance of human purposes.

During the course of this compilation, and as auxiliary to it, he was led to study the works of MENU, reputed by the *Hindus* to be the oldest, and holiest of legislatures; and finding them to comprize a system of religious and civil duties, and of law in all its branches, so comprehensive and minutely exact, that it might be considered as the Institutes of *Hindu* law, he

presented a translation of them to the Government of *Bengal*. During the same period, deeming no labour excessive or superfluous that tended, in any respect, to promote the welfare or happiness of mankind, he gave the public an *English* version of the *Arabick* text of the SIRAJIYAH, or *Mahomedan* Law of Inheritance, with a Commentary. He had already published in *England*, a translation of a Tract on the same subject, by another *Mahomedan* Lawyer, containing, as his own words express, “ a lively and elegant epitome of the law of Inheritance, according to ZAID.”

To these learned and important works, so far out of the road of amusement, nothing could have engaged his application, but that desire which he ever professed, of rendering his knowledge useful to his nation, and beneficial to the inhabitants of these provinces.

Without attending to the chronological order of their publication, I shall briefly recapitulate his other performances in *Asiatick* Literature, as far as my knowledge and recollection of them extend.

The vanity and petulance of ANQUETIL DU PERRON, with his illiberal reflections on some of the learned members of the University of *Oxford*, extorted from him a letter, in the *French* language, which has been admired for accurate

criticism, just satire, and elegant composition. A regard for the literary reputation of his country, induced him to translate, from a *Persian* original into *French*, the life of NADIR SHAH, that it might not be carried out of England, with a reflection, that no person had been found in the British dominions capable of translating it. The students of Persian literature must ever be grateful to him, for a grammar of that language, in which he has shown the possibility of combining taste, and elegance, with the precision of a grammarian; and every admirer of *Arabick* poetry, must acknowledge his obligations to him, for an *English* version of the seven celebrated poems, so well known by the name of *Moallakat*, from the distinction to which their excellence had entitled them, of being suspended in the temple of *Mecca*: I should scarcely think it of importance to mention, that he did not disdain the office of Editor of a *Sanscrit* and *Persian* work, if it did not afford me an opportunity of adding, that the latter was published at his own expence, and was sold for the benefit of insolvent debtors. A similar application was made of the produce of the *SIRAJIYAH*.

Of his lighter productions, the elegant amusements of his leisure hours, comprehending hymns on the *Hindu* mythology, poems



consisting chiefly of translations from the *Asiatick* languages, and the version of SACONTALA, an ancient *Indian* drama, it would be unbecoming to speak in a style of importance which he did not himself annex to them. They show the activity of a vigorous mind, its fertility, its genius, and its taste. Nor shall I particularly dwell on the discourses addressed to this Society, which we have all perused or heard, or on the other learned and interesting dissertations, which form so large, and valuable a portion of the records of our Researches; let us lament, that the spirit which dictated them is to us extinct, and that the voice to which we listened with improvement, and rapture, will be heard by us no more.

But I cannot pass over a paper, which has fallen into my possession since his demise, in the hand-writing of Sir William Jones himself, entitled DESIDERATA, as more explanatory than any thing I can say, of the comprehensive views of his enlightened mind. It contains, as a perusal of it will show, whatever is most curious, important, and attainable in the sciences and histories of *India*, *Arabia*, *China*, and *Tartary*; subjects, which he had already most amply discussed in the disquisitions which he laid before the Society.

DESIDERATA.

INDIA.

1.—The Ancient Geography of India, &c. from the Puranas.

2.—A Botanical Description of Indian Plants, from the Coshas, &c.

3.—A Grammar of the Sanscrit Language, from Panini, &c.

4.—A Dictionary of the Sanscrit Language, from thirty-two original Vocabularies and Niruṭti.

5.—On the Ancient Music of the Indians.

6.—On the Medical Substances of India, and the Indian Art of Medicine.

7.—On the Philosophy of the Ancient Indians.

8.—A Translation of the Veda.

9.—On Ancient Indian Geometry, Astronomy, and Algebra.

10.—A Translation of the Puranas.

11.—A Translation of the Mahabharat and Ramayan.

12.—On the Indian Theatre, &c. &c. &c.

13.—On the Indian Constellations, with their Mythology, from the Puranas.

14.—The History of India before the Mahomedan conquest, from the Sanscrit-Cashmir Histories.

ARABIA.

15.—The History of Arabia before Mahommed.

16.—A Translation of the Hamasa.

17.—A Translation of Hariri.

18.—A Translation of the Facahatul Khulafa.

Of the Cafiah.

PERSIA.

19.—The History of Persia from Authorities in Sanscrit, Arabick, Greek, Turkish, Persian, ancient and modern.

Firdausi's Khofrau nama.

20.—The five Poems of Nizami, translated in prose.

A Dictionary of pure Persian. Jehangire.

CHINA.

21.—A Translation of the Shi-king.

22.—The text of Can-fu-tsu verbally translated.

TARTARY.

23.—A History of the Tartar Nations, chiefly of the Moguls and Othmans, from the Turkish and Persian.

WE are not authorized to conclude, that he had himself formed a determination to complete the works which his genius and knowledge had thus sketched ; the task seems to require a period, beyond the probable duration of any human life ; but we, who had the happiness to know Sir William Jones, who were witnesses of his indefatigable perseverance in the pursuit of knowledge, and of his ardour to accomplish whatever he deemed important ; who saw the extent of his intellectual powers, his wonderful attainments in literature and science, and the facility with which all his compositions were made, cannot doubt, if it had pleased Providence to protract the date of his existence, that he would have ably executed much, of what he had so extensively planned.

I have hitherto principally confined my discourse to the pursuits of our late President in Oriental literature, which, from their extent, might appear to have occupied all his time ; but they neither precluded his attention to professional studies, nor to science in general : amongst his publications in *Europe*, in polite literature, exclusive of various compositions in prose and verse, I find a translation of the speeches of ISÆUS, with a learned comment ; and, in law, an Essay on the Law of Bailments :

upon the subject of this last work, I cannot deny myself the gratification of quoting the sentiments of a celebrated historian : “ Sir William Jones has given an ingenious and rational essay on the law of Bailments. He is perhaps the only lawyer equally conversant with the year books of *Westminster*, the commentaries of *ULPIAN*, the Attic pleadings of *ISÆUS*, and the sentences of *Arabian* and *Persian Cadhis*.”

His professional studies did not commence before his twenty-second year, and I have his own authority for asserting, that the first book of *English* jurisprudence which he ever studied, was *FORTESCUE*'s essay in praise of the laws of *England*.

Of the ability and conscientious integrity, with which he discharged the functions of a Magistrate, and the duties of a Judge of the Supreme Court of Judicature in this settlement, the public voice and public regret bear ample and merited testimony. The same penetration which marked his scientific researches, distinguished his legal investigations and decisions ; and he deemed no inquiries burthensome, which had for their object substantial justice under the rules of law.

His addresses to the jurors, are not less dis-

tinguished for philanthropy, and liberality of sentiment, than for just expositions of the law, perspicuity, and elegance of diction; and his oratory was as captivating as his arguments were convincing.

In an epilogue to his commentaries on *Asiatick* poetry, he bids farewell to polite literature, without relinquishing his affection for it; and concludes with an intimation of his intention to study law, expressed in a wish, which we now know to have been prophetic.

Mihi sit, oro, non inutilis toga,  
Nec indiferta lingua, nec turpis manus !

I have already enumerated attainments and works, which, from their diversity and extent, seem far beyond the capacity of the most enlarged minds; but the catalogue may yet be augmented. To a proficiency in the languages of *Greece*, *Rome*, and *Asia*, he added the knowledge of the philosophy of those countries, and of every thing curious and valuable that had been taught in them. The doctrines of the *Academy*, the *Lyceum*, or the *Portico*, were not more familiar to him than the tenets of the *Vedas*, the mysticism of the *Sufs*, or the religion of the ancient *Persians*; and whilst with a kindred genius he perused with

rapture the heroic, lyric, or moral compositions, of the most renowned poets of *Greece*, *Rome*, and *Asia*, he could turn with equal delight and knowledge, to the sublime speculations, or mathematical calculations, of BARROW and NEWTON. With them also, he professed his conviction of the truth of the *Christian* religion, and he justly deemed it no inconsiderable advantage, that his researches had corroborated the multiplied evidence of revelation, by confirming the *Mosaic* account of the primitive world. We all recollect, and can refer to, the following sentiments in his eighth anniversary discourse.

“ Theological inquiries are no part of my  
 “ present subject; but I cannot refrain from  
 “ adding, that the collection of tracts, which  
 “ we call from their excellence the Scriptures,  
 “ contain, independently of a divine origin,  
 “ more true sublimity, more exquisite beauty,  
 “ purer morality, more important history, and  
 “ finer strains both of poetry and eloquence,  
 “ than could be collected within the same  
 “ compass from all other books, that were  
 “ ever composed in any age, or in any  
 “ idiom. The two parts, of which the  
 “ Scriptures consist, are connected by a chain  
 “ of compositions, which bear no resemblance  
 “ in form or style to any that can be produced

“ from the stores of *Grecian, Indian, Persian,* or  
 “ even *Arabian* learning; the antiquity of those  
 “ compositions no man doubts, and the un-  
 “ strained application of them to events long sub-  
 “ sequent to their publication, is a solid ground  
 “ of belief, that they were genuine predictions,  
 “ and consequently inspired.”

There were in truth few sciences, in which he had not acquired considerable proficiency; in most, his knowledge was profound. The theory of music was familiar to him; nor had he neglected to make himself acquainted with the interesting discoveries lately made in chemistry; and I have heard him assert, that his admiration of the structure of the human frame, had induced him to attend for a season to a course of anatomical lectures delivered by his friend, the celebrated HUNTER.

His last and favourite pursuit, was the study of *Botany*, which he originally began under the confinement of a severe and lingering disorder, which with most minds, would have proved a disqualification from any application. It constituted the principal amusement of his leisure hours. In the arrangements of LINNÆUS he discovered system, truth, and science, which never failed to captivate and engage his attention; and from the proofs which he has



exhibited of his progress in *Botany*, we may conclude that he would have extended his discoveries in that science. The last composition which he read in this Society, was a description of select *Indian* plants, and I hope his Executors will allow us to fulfil his intention of publishing it, as a number in our Researches.

It cannot be deemed useless or superfluous to inquire, by what arts or method he was enabled to attain to a degree of knowledge almost universal, and apparently beyond the powers of man, during a life little exceeding forty-seven years.

The faculties of his mind, by nature vigorous, were improved by constant exercise; and his memory, by habitual practice, had acquired a capacity of retaining whatever had once been impressed upon it. To an unextinguished ardour for universal knowledge, he joined a perseverance in the pursuit of it, which subdued all obstacles; his studies began with the dawn, and during the intermissions of professional duties, were continued throughout the day; reflection and meditation strengthened and confirmed what industry and investigation had accumulated. It was a fixed principle with him, from which he never voluntarily deviated, not to be deterred by any difficulties that were sur-

mountable, from prosecuting to a successful termination, what he had once deliberately undertaken.

But what appears to me more particularly to have enabled him to employ his talents so much to his own and the public advantage, was the regular allotment of his time to particular occupations, and a scrupulous adherence to the distribution which he had fixed ; hence, all his studies were pursued without interruption or confusion : nor can I here omit remarking, what may probably have attracted your observation as well as mine, the candour and complacency with which he gave his attention to all persons, of whatsoever quality, talents, or education ; he justly concluded, that curious or important information, might be gained even from the illiterate ; and wherever it was to be obtained, he sought and seized it.

Of the private and social virtues of our lamented President, our hearts are the best records ; to you, who knew him, it cannot be necessary for me to expatiate on the independence of his integrity, his humanity, probity, or benevolence, which every living creature participated ; on the affability of his conversation and manners, or his modest unassuming deportment : nor need I remark, that he was totally free from pedantry, as well as

from arrogance and self-sufficiency, which sometimes accompany and disgrace the greatest abilities; his presence was the delight of every society, which his conversation exhilarated and improved; and the public have not only to lament the loss of his talents and abilities, but that of his example.

To him, as the founder of our Institution, and whilst he lived, its firmest support, our reverence is more particularly due; instructed, animated, and encouraged by him, genius was called forth into exertion, and modest merit was excited to distinguish itself. Anxious for the reputation of the Society, he was indefatigable in his own endeavours to promote it, whilst he cheerfully assisted those of others. In losing him, we have not only been deprived of our brightest ornament, but of a guide and patron, on whose instructions, judgment, and candour, we could implicitly rely.

But it will, I trust, be long, very long, before the remembrance of his virtues, his genius, and abilities, lose that influence over the members of this Society, which his living example had maintained; and if previous to his demise he had been asked, by what posthumous honours or attentions we could best show our respect for his memory? I may venture to assert he would have replied, "By exerting yourselves

“ to support the credit of the Society ;” applying to it, perhaps, the dying wish of father PAUL, “ esto perpetua !”

In this wish we must all concur, and with it, I close *this address to you,*



THE WORKS  
OF  
SIR WILLIAM JONES.

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A DISCOURSE ON THE INSTITUTION OF A  
SOCIETY,

FOR INQUIRING INTO THE

HISTORY, CIVIL AND NATURAL, THE ANTIQUITIES, ARTS,  
SCIENCES, AND LITERATURE, OF

ASIA.

BY THE PRESIDENT.

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GENTLEMEN,

WHEN I was at sea last August, on my voyage to this country, which I had long and ardently desired to visit, I found one evening, on inspecting the observations of the day, that *India* lay before us, and *Persia* on our left, whilst a breeze from *Arabia* blew nearly on our stern. A situation so pleasing in itself, and to me so new, could not fail to awaken a train of reflections in a mind, which had early been accustomed to

contemplate with delight the eventful histories and agreeable fictions of this eastern world. It gave me inexpressible pleasure to find myself in the midst of so noble an amphitheatre, almost encircled by the vast regions of *Asia*, which has ever been esteemed the nurse of sciences, the inventors of delightful and useful arts, the scene of glorious actions, fertile in the productions of human genius, abounding in natural wonders, and infinitely diversified in the forms of religion and government, in the laws, manners, customs, and languages, as well as in the features and complexions, of men. I could not help remarking, how important and extensive a field was yet unexplored, and how many solid advantages unimproved; and when I considered, with pain, that, in this fluctuating, imperfect, and limited condition of life, such inquiries and improvements could only be made by the united efforts of many, who are not easily brought, without some pressing inducement or strong impulse, to converge in a common point, I consoled myself with a hope, founded on opinions which it might have the appearance of flattery to mention, that, if in any country or community, such an union could be effected, it was among my countrymen in *Bengal*, with some of whom I already had, and with most was desirous of having, the pleasure of being intimately acquainted.

You have realized that hope, gentlemen, and even anticipated a declaration of my wishes, by your alacrity in laying the foundation of a society for inquiring into the history and antiquities, the natural productions, arts, sciences, and literature of *Asia*. I may confidently foretel, that an institution so likely to afford entertainment, and convey knowledge, to mankind, will advance to maturity by slow, yet certain, degrees; as the Royal Society, which at first was only a meeting of a few literary friends at *Oxford*, rose gradually to that splendid zenith, at which a *Halley* was their secretary, and a *Newton* their president.

Although it is my humble opinion, that, in order to ensure our success and permanence, we must keep a middle course between a languid remissness, and an over zealous activity, and that the tree, which you have auspiciously planted, will produce fairer blossoms, and more exquisite fruit, if it be not at first exposed to too great a glare of sunshine, yet I take the liberty of submitting to your consideration a few general ideas on the plan of our society; assuring you, that, whether you reject or approve them, your correction will give me both pleasure and instruction, as your flattering attentions have already conferred on me the highest honour.

It is your design, I conceive, to take an ample



space for your learned investigations, bounding them only by the geographical limits of *Afia*; so that, considering *Hindustan* as a centre, and turning your eyes in idea to the North, you have on your right, many important kingdoms in the Eastern peninsula, the ancient and wonderful empire of *China* with all her *Tartarian* dependencies, and that of *Japan*, with the cluster of precious islands, in which many singular curiosities have too long been concealed: before you lies that prodigious chain of mountains, which formerly perhaps were a barrier against the violence of the sea, and beyond them the very interesting country of *Tibet*, and the vast regions of *Tartary*, from which, as from the *Trojan* horse of the poets, have issued so many consummate warriors, whose domain has extended at least from the banks of the *Ilissus* to the mouths of the *Ganges*: on your left are the beautiful and celebrated provinces of *Iran* or *Persia*, the unmeasured, and perhaps unmeasurable deserts of *Arabia*, and the once flourishing kingdom of *Yemen*, with the pleasant isles that the *Arabs* have subdued or colonized; and farther westward, the *Asiatick* dominions of the *Turkish* sultans, whose moon seems approaching rapidly to its wane.—By this great circumference, the field of your useful researches will be inclosed; but, since *Egypt* had unquestionably an old con-

nection with this country, if not with *China*, since the language and literature of the *Abyssinians* bear a manifest affinity to those of *Asia*, since the *Arabian* arms prevailed along the *African* coast of the *Mediterranean*, and even erected a powerful dynasty on the continent of *Europe*, you may not be displeas'd occasionally to follow the streams of *Asiatick* learning a little beyond its natural boundary; and, if it be necessary or convenient, that a short name or epithet be given to our society, in order to distinguish it in the world, that of *Asiatick* appears both classical and proper, whether we consider the place or the object of the institution, and preferable to *Oriental*, which is in truth a word merely relative, and, though commonly used in *Europe*, conveys no very distinct idea.

If now it be ask'd, what are the intended objects of our inquiries within these spacious limits, we answer, MAN and NATURE; whatever is performed by the one, or produced by the other. Human knowledge has been elegantly analysed according to the three great faculties of the mind, *memory*, *reason*, and *imagination*, which we constantly find employed in arranging and retaining, comparing and distinguishing, combining and diversifying, the ideas, which we receive through our senses, or acquire by reflection; hence the three main branches of learning are

*history, science, and art*: the first comprehends either an account of natural productions, or the genuine records of empires and states; the second embraces the whole circle of pure and mixed mathematicks, together with ethicks and law, as far as they depend on the reasoning faculty; and the third includes all the beauties of imagery and the charms of invention, displayed in modulated language, or represented by colour, figure, or sound.

Agreeably to this analysis, you will investigate whatever is rare in the stupendous fabrick of nature, will correct the geography of *Asia* by new observations and discoveries; will trace the annals, and even traditions, of those nations, who from time to time have peopled or desolated it; and will bring to light their various forms of government, with their institutions civil and religious; you will examine their improvements and methods in arithmetick and geometry, in trigonometry, mensuration, mechanicks, opticks, astronomy, and general physicks; their systems of morality, grammar, rhetorick, and dialectick; their skill in chirurgery and medicine, and their advancement, whatever it may be, in anatomy and chymistry. To this you will add researches into their agriculture, manufactures, trade; and, whilst you inquire with pleasure into their musick, architecture,

painting, and poetry, will not neglect those inferior arts, by which the comforts and even elegances of social life are supplied or improved. You may observe, that I have omitted their languages, the diversity and difficulty of which are a sad obstacle to the progress of useful knowledge; but I have ever considered languages as the mere instruments of real learning, and think them improperly confounded with learning itself: the attainment of them is, however, indispensably necessary; and if to the *Persian*, *Armenian*, *Turkish*, and *Arabick*, could be added not only the *Sanscrit*, the treasures of which we may now hope to see unlocked, but even the *Chinese*, *Tartarian*, *Japanese*, and the various infular dialects, an immense mine would then be open, in which we might labour with equal delight and advantage.

Having submitted to you these imperfect thoughts on the *limits* and *objects* of our future society, I request your permission to add a few hints on the *conduct* of it in its present immature state.

LUCIAN begins one of his satirical pieces against historians, with declaring that the only true proposition in his work was, that it should contain nothing true; and perhaps it may be advisable at first, in order to prevent any difference of sentiment on particular points not immediately

before us, to establish but one rule, namely, to have no rules at all. This only I mean, that, in the infancy of any society, there ought to be no confinement, no trouble, no expense, no unnecessary formality. Let us, if you please, for the present, have weekly evening meetings in this hall, for the purpose of hearing original papers read on such subjects, as fall within the circle of our inquiries. Let all curious and learned men be invited to send their tracts to our secretary, for which they ought immediately to receive our thanks; and if, towards the end of each year, we should be supplied with a sufficiency of valuable materials to fill a volume, let us present our *Asiatick* miscellany to the literary world, who have derived so much pleasure and information from the agreeable work of *Kæmpfer*, than which we can scarce propose a better model, that they will accept with eagerness any fresh entertainment of the same kind. You will not perhaps be disposed to admit mere translations of considerable length, except of such unpublished essays or treatises as may be transmitted to us by native authors; but, whether you will enrol as members any number of learned natives, you will hereafter decide, with many other questions as they happen to arise; and you will think, I presume, that all questions should be decided on a ballot, by a majority of two

thirds, and that nine members should be requisite to constitute a board for such decisions. These points, however, and all others I submit entirely, gentlemen, to your determination, having neither wish nor pretension to claim any more than my single right of suffrage. One thing only, as essential to your dignity, I recommend with earnestness, on no account to admit a new member, who has not expressed a voluntary desire to become so; and in that case, you will not require, I suppose, any other qualification than a love of knowledge, and a zeal for the promotion of it.

Your institution, I am persuaded, will ripen of itself, and your meetings will be amply supplied with interesting and amusing papers, as soon as the object of your inquiries shall be generally known. There are, it may not be delicate to name them, but there are many, from whose important studies I cannot but conceive high expectations; and, as far as mere labour will avail, I sincerely promise, that, if in my allotted sphere of jurisprudence, or in any intellectual excursion, that I may have leisure to make, I should be so fortunate as to collect, by accident, either fruits or flowers, which may seem valuable or pleasing, I shall offer my humble *Nezr* to your society with as much respectful zeal as to the greatest potentate on earth.

THE SECOND  
ANNIVERSARY DISCOURSE,

DELIVERED 24 FEBRUARY, 1785,

BY

THE PRESIDENT.

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GENTLEMEN,

IF the Deity of the *Hindus*, by whom all their just requests are believed to be granted with singular indulgence, had proposed last year to gratify my warmest wishes, I could have desired nothing more ardently than the success of your institution; because I can desire nothing in preference to the general good, which your plan seems calculated to promote, by bringing to light many useful and interesting tracts, which, being too short for separate publication, might lie many years concealed, or, perhaps, irrecoverably perish: my wishes are accomplished, without an invocation to CA'MADHE'NU; and your Society, having already passed its infant state, is advancing to maturity with every mark of a healthy and robust constitution. When I reflect, indeed, on the variety of subjects, which have been discussed before you, concerning the his-

tory, laws, manners, arts, and antiquities of *Aſia*, I am unable to decide whether my pleaſure or my ſurpriſe be the greater; for I will not diſſemble, that your progreſs has far exceeded my expectations; and, though we muſt ſeriously deplore the loſs of thoſe excellent men, who have lately departed from this Capital, yet there is a proſpect ſtill of large contributions to your ſtock of *Aſiatick* learning, which, I am perſuaded, will continually increaſe. My late journey to *Benares* has enabled me to aſſure you, that many of your members, who reſide at a diſtance, employ a part of their leiſure in preparing additions to your archives; and, unleſs I am too ſanguine, you will ſoon receive light from them on ſeveral topicks entirely new in the republick of letters.

It was principally with a deſign to open ſources of ſuch information, that I long had meditated an expedition up the *Ganges* during the ſuſpenſion of my buſineſs; but, although I had the ſatisfaction of viſiting two ancient ſeats of *Hindu* ſuperſtition and literature, yet, illneſs having detained me a conſiderable time in the way, it was not in my power to continue in them long enough to purſue my inquiries; and I left them, as *ÆNEAS* is feigned to have left the ſhades, when his guide made him recollect *the ſwift flight of irrevocable time*, with a curioſity



raised to the height, and a regret not easy to be described.

Whoever travels in *Asia*, especially if he be conversant with the literature of the countries through which he passes, must naturally remark the superiority of *European* talents : the observation, indeed, is at least as old as ALEXANDER ; and, though we cannot agree with the sage preceptor of that ambitious Prince, that “ the *Asiatics* are born to be slaves,” yet the *Athenian* poet seems perfectly in the right, when he represents *Europe* as a *sovereign Princess*, and *Asia* as *her Handmaid*: but, if the mistress be transcendently majestick, it cannot be denied that the attendant has many beauties, and some advantages peculiar to herself. The ancients were accustomed to pronounce *panegyrics* on their own countrymen at the expense of all other nations, with a political view, perhaps, of stimulating them by praise, and exciting them to still greater exertions ; but such arts are here unnecessary ; nor would they, indeed, become a society, who seek nothing but truth unadorned by rhetoric ; and, although we must be conscious of our superior advancement in all kinds of useful knowledge, yet we ought not therefore to contemn the people of *Asia*, from whose researches into nature, works of art, and inventions of fancy, many valuable hints may be de-

rived for our own improvement and advantage. If that, indeed, were not the principal object of your institution, little else could arise from it but the mere gratification of curiosity; and I should not receive so much delight from the humble share, which you have allowed me to take, in promoting it.

To form an exact parallel between the works and actions of the Western and Eastern worlds, would require a tract of no inconsiderable length; but we may decide on the whole, that reason and taste are the grand prerogatives of *European* minds, while the *Asiatics* have soared to loftier heights in the sphere of imagination. The civil history of their vast empires, and of *India* in particular, must be highly interesting to our common country; but we have a still nearer interest in knowing all former modes of ruling *these inestimable provinces*, on the prosperity of which so much of our national welfare, and individual benefit, seems to depend. A minute *geographical* knowledge, not only of *Bengal* and *Babar*, but, for evident reasons, of *all the kingdoms bordering on them*, is closely connected with an account of their many revolutions: but the *natural* productions of these territories, especially in the *vegetable* and *mineral* systems, are momentous objects of research to an *imperial*,

but, which is a character of equal dignity, a *commercial*, people.

If *Botany* may be described by metaphors drawn from the science itself, we may justly pronounce a minute acquaintance with *plants*, their *classes*, *orders*, *kinds*, and *species*, to be its *flowers*, which can only produce *fruit* by an application of that knowledge to the purposes of life, particularly to *diet*, by which diseases may be avoided, and to *medicine*, by which they may be remedied: for the improvement of the last mentioned art, than which none surely can be more beneficial to mankind, the virtues of *minerals* also should be accurately known. So highly has medical skill been prized by the ancient *Indians*, that one of the *fourteen Retna's*, or *precious things*, which their Gods are believed to have produced by churning the ocean with the mountain *Mandara*, was a *learned physician*. What their old books contain on this subject, we ought certainly to discover, and that without loss of time; lest the venerable but abstruse language, in which they are composed, should cease to be perfectly intelligible, even to the best educated natives, through a want of powerful invitation to study it. BERNIER, who was himself of the Faculty, mentions approved medical books in *Sanscrit*, and cites a few aphorisms,

which appear judicious and rational; but we can expect nothing so important from the works of *Hindu* or *Muselman* physicians, as the knowledge, which experience must have given them, of *simple* medicines. I have seen an *Indian* prescription of *fifty-four*, and another of *sixty-six*, ingredients; but such compositions are always to be suspected, since the effect of one ingredient may destroy that of another; and it were better to find certain accounts of a single leaf or berry, than to be acquainted with the most elaborate compounds, unless they too have been proved by a multitude of successful experiments. The noble deobstruent oil, extracted from the *Eranda* nut, the whole family of *Balsams*, the incomparable stomachick root from *Columbo*, the fine astringent ridiculously called *Japan* earth, but in truth produced by the decoction of an *Indian* plant, have long been used in *Asia*; and who can foretel what glorious discoveries of other oils, roots, and salutary juices, may be made by your society? If it be doubtful whether the *Peruvian* bark be *always* efficacious in this country, its place may, perhaps, be supplied by some indigenous vegetable equally antiseptick, and more congenial to the climate. Whether any treatises on *Agriculture* have been written by experienced natives of these provinces, I am not yet informed; but since the court of *Spain* ex-

pect to find useful remarks in an *Arabick* tract preserved in the *Escorial*, on *the cultivation of land in that kingdom*, we should inquire for similar compositions, and examine the contents of such as we can procure.

The sublime science of Chymistry, which I was on the point of calling *divine*, must be added, as a key to the richest treasuries of nature; and it is impossible to foresee how greatly it may improve our *manufactures*, especially if it can fix those brilliant *dyes*, which want nothing of perfect beauty but a longer continuance of their splendour; or how far it may lead to new methods of *fluxing and compounding metals*, which the *Indians*, as well as the *Cbinese*, are thought to have practised in higher perfection than ourselves.

In those elegant arts, which are called *fine* and *liberal*, though of less general utility than the labours of the mechanick, it is really wonderful how much a single nation has excelled the whole world: I mean the ancient *Greeks*, whose *Sculpture*, of which we have exquisite remains both on gems and in marble, no modern tool can equal; whose *Architecture* we can only imitate at a servile distance, but are unable to make one addition to it, without destroying its graceful simplicity; whose *Poetry* still delights us in youth, and amuses us at a maturer age; and of

whose *Painting* and *Musick* we have the concurrent relations of so many grave authors, that it would be strange incredulity to doubt their excellence. *Painting*, as an art belonging to the powers of the imagination, or what is commonly called *Genius*, appears to be yet in its infancy among the people of the East: but the *Hindu* system of *musick* has, I believe, been formed on truer principles than our own; and all the skill of the native composers is directed to the great object of their art, *the natural expression of strong passions*, to which *melody*, indeed, is often sacrificed: though some of their tunes are pleasing even to an *European* ear. Nearly the same may be truly asserted of the *Arabian* or *Persian* system; and, by a correct explanation of the best books on that subject, much of the old *Grecian* theory may probably be recovered.

The *poetical* works of the *Arabs* and *Persians*, which differ surprisngly in their style and form, are here pretty generally known; and, though tastes, concerning which there can be no disputing, are divided in regard to their merit, yet we may safely say of them, what ABULFAZL pronounces of the *Mabábbárat*, that, “ although  
 “ they abound with extravagant images and de-  
 “ scriptions, they are in the highest degree enter-  
 “ taining and instructive.” Poets of the greatest genius, PINDAR, ÆSCHYLUS, DANTE, PE-

TRARCA, SHAKESPEAR, SPENSER, have most abounded in images not far from the brink of absurdity; but, if their luxuriant fancies, or those of ABULOLA, FIRDAUSI, NIZA'MI, were pruned away at the hazard of their strength and majesty, we should lose many pleasures by the amputation. If we may form a just opinion of the *Sanscrit* poetry from the specimens already exhibited, (though we can only judge perfectly by consulting the originals), we cannot but thirst for the whole work of VYA'SA, with which a member of our society, whose presence deters me from saying more of him, will in due time gratify the publick. The poetry of *Mathurà*, which is the *Parnassian* land of the *Hindus*, has a softer and less elevated strain; but, since the inhabitants of the districts near *Agra*, and principally of the *Duab*, are said to surpass all other *Indians* in eloquence, and to have composed many agreeable tales and lovesongs, which are still extant, the *Bhāshā*, or *vernacular idiom* of *Krāja*, in which they are written, should not be neglected. No specimens of genuine *Oratory* can be expected from nations, among whom the form of government precludes even the idea of *popular eloquence*; but the art of writing, in elegant and modulated periods, has been cultivated in *Asia* from the earliest ages: the *Vēda's*, as well as the *Alcoran*, are written in measured

prose ; and the compositions of ISOCRATES are not more highly polished than those of the best *Arabian* and *Persian* authors.

Of the *Hindu* and *Muselman* architecture there are yet many noble remains in *Babar*, and some in the vicinity of *Malda* ; nor am I unwilling to believe, that even those ruins, of which you will, I trust, be presented with correct delineations, may furnish our own architects with new ideas of beauty and sublimity.

Permit me now to add a few words on the *Sciences*, properly so named ; in which it must be admitted, that the *Asiatics*, if compared with our Western nations, are mere children. One of the most sagacious men in this age, who continues, I hope, to improve and adorn it, SAMUEL JOHNSON, remarked in my hearing, that, “ if NEWTON had flourished in ancient Greece, he would have been worshipped as a “ divinity :” how zealously then would he be adored in *Hindustan*, if his incomparable writings could be read and comprehended by the *Pandits* of *Cashmir* or *Benares* ! I have seen a mathematical book in *Sanscrit* of the highest antiquity ; but soon perceived from the diagrams, that it contained only simple elements : there may, indeed, have been, in the favourable atmosphere of *Asia*, some diligent observers of the celestial bodies, and such observations, as are



recorded, should indisputably be made publick ; but let us not expect any new *methods*, or the analysis of new *curves*, from the geometricians of *Iran*, *Turkistan*, or *India*. Could the works of ARCHIMEDES, the NEWTON of *Sicily*, be restored to their genuine purity by the help of *Arabick* versions, we might then have reason to triumph on the success of our scientific inquiries ; or could the successive improvements and various rules of *Algebra* be traced through *Arabian* channels, to which CARDAN boasted that he had access, the modern History of *Mathematics* would receive considerable illustration.

The Jurisprudence of the *Hindus* and *Muselmans* will produce more immediate advantage ; and, if some standard *law-tracts* were accurately translated from the *Sanscrit* and *Arabick*, we might hope in time to see so complete a Digest of *Indian* Laws, that all disputes among the natives might be decided without *uncertainty*, which is in truth a disgrace, though fatirically called a *glory*, to the forensick science.

All these objects of inquiry must appear to you, Gentlemen, in so strong a light, that bare intimations of them will be sufficient ; nor is it necessary to make use of *emulation* as an incentive to an ardent pursuit of them : yet I cannot forbear expressing a wish, that the activity of the *French* in the same pursuits may not be superior.

to ours, and that the researches of M. SONNERAT, whom the court of *Verfailles* employed for seven years in these climates, merely to collect such materials as we are seeking, may kindle, instead of abating, our own curiosity and zeal. If you assent, as I flatter myself you do, to these opinions, you will also concur in promoting the object of them; and a few ideas having presented themselves to my mind, I presume to lay them before you, with an entire submission to your judgement.

No contributions, except those of the literary kind, will be requisite for the support of the society; but, if each of us were occasionally to contribute a succinct description of such manuscripts as he had perused or inspected, with their dates and the names of their owners, and to propose for solution such *questions* as had occurred to him concerning *Asiatick* Art, Science, and History, natural or civil, we should possess without labour, and almost by imperceptible degrees, a fuller catalogue of Oriental books, than has hitherto been exhibited, and our correspondents would be apprised of those points, to which we chiefly direct our investigations. Much may, I am confident, be expected from the communications of *learned natives*, whether lawyers, physicians, or private scholars, who would eagerly, on the first invitation, send us their *Mekâmât*

and *Risâlahs* on a variety of subjects; some for the sake of advancing general knowledge, but most of them from a desire, neither uncommon nor unreasonable, of attracting notice, and recommending themselves to favour. With a view to avail ourselves of this disposition, and to bring their latent science under our inspection, it might be advisable to print and circulate a short memorial, in *Persian* and *Hindi*, setting forth, in a style accommodated to their own habits and prejudices, the design of our institution; nor would it be impossible hereafter, to give a medal annually, with inscriptions in *Persian* on one side, and on the reverse in *Sanscrit*, as the prize of merit, to the writer of the best essay or dissertation. To instruct others is the prescribed duty of learned *Brahmans*, and, if they be men of substance, without reward; but they would all be flattered with an honorary mark of distinction; and the *Mahomedans* have not only the permission, but the positive command, of their law-giver, to *search for learning even in the remotest parts of the globe*. It were superfluous to suggest, with how much correctness and facility their compositions might be translated for our use, since their languages are now more generally and perfectly understood than they have ever been by any nation of *Europe*.

I have detained you, I fear, too long by this

address, though it has been my endeavour to reconcile comprehensiveness with brevity: the subjects, which I have lightly sketched, would be found, if minutely examined, to be inexhaustible; and, since no limits can be set to your researches but the boundaries of *Asia* itself, I may not improperly conclude with wishing for your society, what the Commentator on the Laws, prays for the constitution, of our country, that  
IT MAY BE PERPETUAL.

THE THIRD  
ANNIVERSARY DISCOURSE,

DELIVERED 2 FEBRUARY, 1786.

BY

THE PRESIDENT.

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IN the former discourses, which I had the honour of addressing to you, Gentlemen, on the *institution* and *objects* of our Society, I confined myself purposely to general topicks; giving in the first a distant prospect of the vast career, on which we were entering, and, in the second, exhibiting a more diffuse, but still superficial, sketch of the various discoveries in History, Science, and Art, which we might justly expect from our inquiries into the literature of *Asia*. I now propose to fill up that outline so comprehensively as to omit nothing essential, yet so concisely as to avoid being tedious; and, if the state of my health shall suffer me to continue long enough in this climate, it is my design, with your permission, to prepare for our annual meetings a series of short dissertations, unconnected in their titles and subjects, but all tending

to a common point of no small importance in the pursuit of interesting truths.

Of all the works, which have been published in our own age, or, perhaps, in any other, on the History of the Ancient World, and *the first population of this habitable globe*, that of Mr. JACOB BRYANT, whom I name with reverence and affection, has the best claim to the praise of deep erudition ingeniously applied, and new theories happily illustrated by an assemblage of numberless converging rays from a most extensive circumference: it falls, nevertheless, as every human work must fall, short of perfection; and the least satisfactory part of it seems to be that, which relates to the derivation of words from *Asiatick* languages. Etymology has, no doubt, some use in historical researches; but it is a medium of proof so very fallacious, that, where it elucidates one fact, it obscures a thousand, and more frequently borders on the ridiculous, than leads to any solid conclusion: it rarely carries with it any *internal* power of conviction from a resemblance of sounds or similitude of letters; yet often, where it is wholly unassisted by those advantages, it may be indisputably proved by *extrinsic* evidence. We know *à posteriori*, that both *fitz* and *hijo*, by the nature of two several dialects, are derived from *filius*; that *uncle* comes from *avus*, and *stranger* from *extra*; that *jour*

is deducible, through the *Italian*, from *dies*; and *rossignol* from *luscinia*, or the *singer in groves*; that *sciuro*, *écureuil*, and *squirrel* are compounded of two *Greek* words descriptive of the animal; which etymologies, though they could not have been demonstrated *à priori*, might serve to confirm, if any such confirmation were necessary, the proofs of a connection between the members of one great Empire; but, when we derive our *hanger*, or *short pendent sword*, from the *Persian*, because ignorant travellers thus misspell the word *kbanjar*, which in truth means a different weapon, or *sandal-wood* from the *Greek*, because we suppose, that *sandals* were sometimes made of it, we gain no ground in proving the affinity of nations, and only weaken arguments, which might otherwise be firmly supported. That *Cu's* then, or, as it certainly is written in one ancient dialect, *Cu't*, and in others, probably, *CA's*, enters into the composition of many proper names, we may very reasonably believe; and that *Algeziras* takes its name from the *Arabick* word for an *island*, cannot be doubted; but, when we are told from *Europe*, that places and provinces in *India* were clearly denominated from those words, we cannot but observe, in the first instance, that the town, in which we now are assembled, is properly written and pronounced *Calicàtâ*; that

both *Cátá* and *Cút* unquestionably mean *places of strength*, or, in general, any *inclosures*; and that *Gujarát* is at least as remote from *Jezirab* in found, as it is in situation.

Another exception (and a third could hardly be discovered by any candid criticism) to the *Analysis of Ancient Mythology*, is, that the *method of reasoning and arrangement of topicks* adopted in that learned work are not quite agreeable to the title, but almost wholly *synthetical*; and, though *synthesis* may be the better mode in pure *science*, where the principles are undeniable, yet it seems less calculated to give complete satisfaction in *historical* disquisitions, where every postulatum will perhaps be refused, and every definition controverted: this may seem a slight objection, but the subject is in itself so interesting, and the full conviction of all reasonable men so desirable, that it may not be lost labour to discuss the same or a similar theory in a method purely analytical, and, after beginning with facts of general notoriety or undisputed evidence, to investigate such truths, as are at first unknown or very imperfectly discerned.

The *five* principal nations, who have in different ages divided among themselves, as a kind of inheritance, the vast continent of *Asia*, with the many islands depending on it, are the *Indians*, the *Chinese*, the *Tartars*, the *Arabs*, and



the *Persians*: *who* they severally were, *whence*, and *when* they came, *where* they now are settled, and *what advantage* a more perfect knowledge of them all may bring to our *European* world, will be shown, I trust, in *five* distinct essays; the last of which will demonstrate the connexion or diversity between them, and solve the great problem, whether they had *any* common origin, and whether that origin was *the same*, which we generally ascribe to them.

I begin with *India*, not because I find reason to believe it the true centre of population or of knowledge, but, because it is the country, which we now inhabit, and from which we may best survey the regions around us; as, in popular language, we speak of the *rising* sun, and of his *progress through the Zodiack*, although it had long ago been imagined, and is now demonstrated, that he is himself the centre of our planetary system. Let me here premise, that, in all these inquiries concerning the history of *India*, I shall confine my researches downwards to the *Mohammedan* conquests at the beginning of the *eleventh* century, but extend them upwards, as high as possible, to the earliest authentick records of the human species.

*India* then, on its most enlarged scale, in which the ancients appear to have understood it, comprises an area of near *forty* degrees on each

side, including a space almost as large as all *Europe*; being divided on the west from *Persia* by the *Arachosian* mountains, limited on the east by the *Chinese* part of the farther peninsula, confined on the north by the wilds of *Tartary*, and extending to the south as far as the isles of *Java*. This trapezium, therefore, comprehends the stupendous hills of *Potyid* or *Tibet*, the beautiful valley of *Cashmír*, and all the domains of the old *Indoscythians*, the countries of *Népál* and *Butánt*, *Cámrúp* or *Afám*, together with *Siam*, *Ava*, *Racan*, and the bordering kingdoms; as far as the *China* of the *Hindus* or *Sín* of the *Arabian* Geographers; not to mention the whole western peninsula with the celebrated island of *Sinbala*, or *Lion-like men*, at its southern extremity. By *India*, in short, I mean that whole extent of country, in which the primitive religion and languages of the *Hindus* prevail at this day with more or less of their ancient purity, and in which the *Nágari* letters are still used with more or less deviation from their original form.

The *Hindus* themselves believe their own country, to which they give the vain epithets of *Medhyama* or *Central*, and *Punyabhúmi*, or the *Land of Virtues*, to have been the portion of **BHARAT**, one of *nine* brothers, whose father had the dominion of the whole earth; and they re-

present the mountains of *Himálaya* as lying to the north, and, to the west, those of *Vindhya*, called also *Vindian* by the *Greeks*; beyond which the *Sindhu* runs in several branches to the sea, and meets it nearly opposite to the point of *Dwáracà*, the celebrated seat of their Shepherd God: in the *south-east* they place the great river *Saravatya*; by which they probably mean that of *Ava*, called also *Airávati* in part of its course, and giving perhaps its ancient name to the gulf of *Sabara*. This domain of *Bharat* they consider as the middle of the *Jambudwipa*, which the *Tibetians* also call the Land of *Zambu*; and the appellation is extremely remarkable; for *Jambu* is the *Sanscrit* name of a delicate fruit called *Jáman* by the *Muselmans*, and by us *rose-apple*; but the largest and richest sort is named *Amrita*, or *Immortal*; and the *Mythologists* of *Tibet* apply the same word to a celestial tree bearing *ambrosial fruit*, and adjoining to four vast rocks, from which as many sacred rivers derive their several streams.

The inhabitants of this extensive tract are described by Mr. LORD with great exactness, and with a picturesque elegance peculiar to our ancient language: “ A people, says he, presented themselves to mine eyes, clothed in linen garments somewhat low descending, of a gesture and garb, as I may say, maidenly and well

“ nigh effeminate, of a countenance shy and  
 “ somewhat estranged, yet smiling out a glozed  
 “ and bashful familiarity.” Mr. ORME, the  
 Historian of *India*, who unites an exquisite taste  
 for every fine art with an accurate knowledge of  
*Asiatick* manners, observes, in his elegant pre-  
 liminary Dissertation, that this “ country has  
 “ been inhabited from the earliest antiquity by  
 “ a people, who have no resemblance, either in  
 “ their figure or manners, with any of the na-  
 “ tions contiguous to them,” and that, “ although  
 “ conquerors have established themselves at dif-  
 “ ferent times in different parts of *India*, yet the  
 “ original inhabitants have lost very little of  
 “ their original character.” The ancients, in  
 fact, give a description of them, which our early  
 travellers confirmed, and our own personal know-  
 ledge of them nearly verifies; as you will per-  
 ceive from a passage in the Geographical Poem  
 of DIONYSIUS, which the Analyst of Ancient  
 Mythology has translated with great spirit:

“ To th’ east a lovely country wide extends,  
 “ INDIA, whose borders the wide ocean bounds;  
 “ On this the sun, new rising from the main,  
 “ Smiles pleas’d, and sheds his early orient beam.  
 “ Th’ inhabitants are swart, and in their locks  
 “ Betray the tints of the dark hyacinth.  
 “ Various their functions; some the rock explore,  
 “ And from the mine extract the latent gold;  
 “ Some labour at the woof with cunning skill,

" And manufacture linen ; others shape  
 " And polish iv'ry with the nicest care :  
 " Many retire to rivers shoal, and plunge  
 " To seek the beryl flaming in its bed,  
 " Or glitt'ring diamond. Oft the jasper's found  
 " Green, but diaphanous, the topaz too  
 " Of ray serene and pleasing ; last of all  
 " The lovely amethyst, in which combine  
 " All the mild shades of purple. The rich soil,  
 " Wash'd by a thousand rivers, from all sides  
 " Pours on the natives wealth without control."

Their sources of wealth are still abundant even after so many revolutions and conquests ; in their manufactures of cotton they still surpass all the world ; and their features have, most probably, remained unaltered since the time of *DIONYSIUS* ; nor can we reasonably doubt, how degenerate and abased so ever the *Hindus* may now appear, that in some early age they were splendid in arts and arms, happy in government, wise in legislation, and eminent in various knowledge : but, since their civil history beyond the middle of the *nineteenth* century from the present time, is involved in a cloud of fables, we seem to possess only *four* general media of satisfying our curiosity concerning it ; namely, first, their *Languages* and *Letters* ; secondly, their *Philosophy* and *Religion* ; thirdly, the actual remains of their old *Sculpture* and *Architecture* ; and fourthly, the written memorials of their *Sciences* and *Arts*.

I. It is much to be lamented, that neither the *Greeks*, who attended ALEXANDER into *India*, nor those who were long connected with it under the *Bactrian* Princes, have left us any means of knowing with accuracy, what vernacular languages they found on their arrival in this Empire. The *Mobammedans*, we know, heard the people of proper *Hindustan*, or *India* on a limited scale, speaking a *Bháṣá*, or living tongue of a very singular construction, the purest dialect of which was current in the districts round *Agrà*, and chiefly on the poetical ground of *Mat'burà*; and this is commonly called the idiom of *Vraja*. Five words in six, perhaps, of this language were derived from the *Sanscrit*, in which books of religion and science were composed, and which appears to have been formed by an exquisite grammatical *arrangement*, as the name itself implies, from some unpolished idiom; but the basis of the *Hinduṣtáni*, particularly the inflexions and regimen of verbs, differed as widely from both those tongues, as *Arabick* differs from *Persian*, or *German* from *Greek*. Now the general effect of conquest is to leave the current language of the conquered people unchanged, or very little altered, in its groundwork, but to blend with it a considerable number of exotick names both for things and for actions; as it has happened in every country, that I can

recollect, where the conquerors have not preserved their own tongue unmixed with that of the natives, like the *Turks* in *Greece*, and the *Saxons* in *Britain*; and this analogy might induce us to believe, that the pure *Hindi*, whether of *Tartarian* or *Chaldean* origin, was primeval in *Upper India*, into which the *Sanscrit* was introduced by conquerors from other kingdoms in some very remote age; for we cannot doubt that the language of the *Veda's* was used in the great extent of country, which has before been delineated, as long as the religion of *Brabhà* has prevailed in it.

The *Sanscrit* language, whatever be its antiquity, is of a wonderful structure; more perfect than the *Greek*, more copious than the *Latin*, and more exquisitely refined than either, yet bearing to both of them a stronger affinity, both in the roots of verbs and in the forms of grammar, than could possibly have been produced by accident; so strong indeed, that no philologer could examine them all three, without believing them to have sprung from some common source, which, perhaps, no longer exists: there is a similar reason, though not quite so forcible, for supposing that both the *Gotbick* and the *Celtick*, though blended with a very different idiom, had the same origin with the *Sanscrit*; and the old *Persian* might be added to the same family, if

this were the place for discussing any question concerning the antiquities of *Persia*.

The *characters*, in which the languages of *India* were originally written, are called *Nágarí*, from *Nagara*, a city with the word *Déva* sometimes prefixed, because they are believed to have been taught by the Divinity himself, who prescribed the artificial order of them in a voice from heaven. These letters, with no greater variation in their form by the change of straight lines to curves, or conversely, than the *Cufick* alphabet has received in its way to *India*, are still adopted in more than twenty kingdoms and states, from the borders of *Cashgar* and *Kboten*, to *Ráma's* bridge, and from the *Sindhu* to the river of *Siam*; nor can I help believing, although the polished and elegant *Dévanágarí* may not be so ancient as the monumental characters in the caverns of *Jarasandha*, that the square *Chaldaick* letters, in which most *Hebrew* books are copied, were originally the same, or derived from the same prototype, both with the *Indian* and *Arabian* characters: that the *Phœnician*, from which the *Greek* and *Roman* alphabets were formed by various changes and inversions, had a similar origin, there can be little doubt; and the inscriptions at *Canárab*, of which you now possess a most accurate copy, seem to be compounded of *Nágarí* and *Ethio-*



*pick* letters, which bear a close relation to each other, both in the mode of writing from the left hand, and in the singular manner of connecting the vowels with the consonants. These remarks may favour an opinion entertained by many, that all the symbols of *sound*, which at first, probably, were only rude outlines of the different organs of speech, had a common origin: the symbols of *ideas*, now used in *Cbina* and *Japan*, and formerly, perhaps, in *Egypt* and *Mexico*, are quite of a distinct nature; but it is very remarkable, that the order of *sounds* in the *Chinese* grammars corresponds nearly with that observed in *Tibet*, and hardly differs from that, which the *Hindus* consider as the invention of their Gods.

II. Of the *Indian* Religion and Philosophy, I shall here say but little; because a full account of each would require a separate volume: it will be sufficient in this dissertation to assume, what might be proved beyond controversy, that we now live among the adorers of those very deities, who were worshipped under different names in old *Greece* and *Italy*, and among the professors of those philosophical tenets, which the *Ionick* and *Attick* writers illustrated with all the beauties of their melodious language. On one hand we see the trident of NEPTUNE, the eagle of JUPITER, the satyrs of BACCHUS, the bow of CUPID,

and the chariot of the *Sun*; on another we hear the cymbals of RHEA, the songs of the *Muses*, and the pastoral tales of APOLLO NOMIUS. In more retired scenes, in groves, and in seminaries of learning, we may perceive the *Brábmans* and the *Sarmanes*, mentioned by CLEMENS, disputing in the forms of *logick*, or discoursing on the vanity of human enjoyments, on the immortality of the soul, her emanation from the eternal mind, her debasement, wanderings, and final union with her source. The *six* philosophical schools, whose principles are explained in the *Dersana Sástra*, comprise all the metaphysics of the old *Academy*, the *Stoa*, the *Lycæum*; nor is it possible to read the *Védánta*, or the many fine compositions in illustration of it, without believing, that PYTHAGORAS and PLATO derived their sublime theories from the same fountain with the sages of *India*. The *Scythian* and *Hyperborean* doctrines and mythology may also be traced in every part of these eastern regions; nor can we doubt, that WOD or ODEN, whose religion, as the northern historians admit, was introduced into *Scandinavia* by a foreign race, was the same with BUDDH, whose rites were probably imported into *India* nearly at the same time, though received much later by the *Chinese*, who soften his name into FO'.

This may be a proper place to ascertain an

important point in the Chronology of the *Hindus*; for the priests of BUDDHA left in *Tibet* and *China* the precise epoch of his appearance, real or imagined, in this Empire; and their information, which had been preserved in writing, was compared by the *Christian* Missionaries and scholars with our own era. COUPLET, DE GUIGNES, GIORGI, and BAILLY, differ a little in their accounts of this epoch, but that of *Couplet* seems the most correct: on taking, however, the medium of the four several dates, we may fix the time of BUDDHA, or the *ninth* great incarnation of VISHNU, in the year one *thousand* and *fourteen* before the birth of CHRIST, or *two thousand seven hundred and ninety-nine* years ago. Now the *Cáshmirians*, who boast of his descent in their kingdom, assert that he appeared on earth about *two* centuries after CRISHNA the *Indian* APOLLO, who took so decided a part in the war of the *Mahábhárat*; and, if an Etymologist were to suppose, that the *Athenians* had embellished their poetical history of PANDION's expulsion and the restoration of ÆGEUS with the *Asiatick* tale of the PANDUS and YUDHISHTIR; neither of which words they could have articulated, I should not hastily deride his conjecture: certain it is, that *Pándumandel* is called by the *Greeks* the country of PANDION, We have, therefore, determined another interest.

ing epoch, by fixing the age of CRISHNA near the *three thousandth* year from the present time; and, as the three first *Avatàrs*, or descents of VISHNU, relate no less clearly to an Universal Deluge, in which eight persons only were saved, than the *fourth* and *fifth* do to the *punishment of impiety* and the *humiliation of the proud*, we may for the present assume, that the *second*, or *silver*, age of the *Hindus* was subsequent to the dispersion from *Babel*; so that we have only a dark interval of about a *thousand* years, which were employed in the settlement of nations, the foundation of states or empires, and the cultivation of civil society. The great incarnate Gods of this intermediate age are both named RA'MA but with different epithets; one of whom bears a wonderful resemblance to the *Indian BACCHUS*, and his wars are the subject of several heroick poems. He is represented as a descendant from SU'RYA, or the SUN, as the husband of SI'TA', and the son of a princess named CAU'SELYA': it is very remarkable, that the *Peruvians*, whose *Incas* boasted of the same descent, styled their greatest festival *Ramafitoo*; whence we may suppose, that South *America* was peopled by the same race, who imported into the farthest parts of *Asia* the rites and fabulous history of RA'MA. These rites and this history are extremely curious; and, although I cannot believe

with NEWTON, that ancient mythology was nothing but historical truth in a poetical dress, nor, with BACON, that it consisted solely of moral and metaphysical allegories, nor with BRYANT, that all the heathen divinities are only different attributes and representations of the Sun or of deceased progenitors, but conceive that the whole system of religious fables rose, like the *Nile*, from several distinct sources, yet I cannot but agree, that one great spring and fountain of all idolatry in the four quarters of the globe was the veneration paid by men to the vast body of fire, which “looks from his sole dominion like the God of this world;” and another, the immoderate respect shown to the memory of powerful or virtuous ancestors, especially the founders of kingdoms, legislators, and warriors, of whom the *Sun* or the *Moon* were wildly supposed to be the parents.

III. The remains of *architecture* and *sculpture* in *India*, which I mention here as mere monuments of antiquity, not as specimens of ancient art, seem to prove an early connection between this country and *Africa*: the pyramids of *Egypt*, the colossal statues described by PAUSANIAS and others, the sphinx, and the HERMES *Canis*, which last bears a great resemblance to the *Varábavatár*, or the incarnation of VISHNU in the form of a *Boar*, indicate the style and mythology of the

same indefatigable workmen, who formed the vast excavations of *Cánárab*, the various temples and images of BUDDHA, and the idols, which are continually dug up at *Gayá*, or in its vicinity. The letters on many of those monuments appear, as I have before intimated, partly of *Indian*, and partly of *Abyssinian* or *Ethiopic*, origin; and all these indubitable facts may induce no ill-grounded opinion, that *Ethiopia* and *Hindustán* were peopled or colonized by the same extraordinary race; in confirmation of which, it may be added, that the mountaineers of *Bengal* and *Babár* can hardly be distinguished in some of their features, particularly their lips and noses, from the modern *Abyssinians*, whom the *Arabs* call the children of CU'SH: and the ancient *Hindus*, according to STRABO, differed in nothing from the *Africans*, but in the straitness and smoothness of their hair, while that of the others was crisp or woolly; a difference proceeding chiefly, if not entirely, from the respective humidity or dryness of their atmospheres: hence the people who *received the first light of the rising sun*, according to the limited knowledge of the ancients, are said by APULBEIUS to be the *Arü* and *Ethiopians*, by which he clearly meant certain nations of *India*; where we frequently see figures of BUDDHA with

*curled hair* apparently designed for a representation of it in its natural state.

IV. It is unfortunate, that the *Silpi Sástra*, or collection of treatises on Arts and Manufactures, which must have contained a treasure of useful information on *dying*, *painting*, and *metallurgy*, has been so long neglected, that few, if any, traces of it are to be found; but the labours of the *Indian* loom and needle have been universally celebrated; and *fine linen* is not improbably supposed to have been called *Sindon*, from the name of the river near which it was wrought in the highest perfection: the people of *Colchis* were also famed for this manufacture, and the *Egyptians* yet more, as we learn from several passages in scripture, and particularly from a beautiful chapter in EZEKIAL containing the most authentick delineation of ancient commerce, of which *Tyre* had been the principal mart. Silk was fabricated immemorially by the *Indians*, though commonly ascribed to the people of *Serica* or *Tancùt*, among whom probably the word *Ser*, which the *Greeks* applied to the *silk-worm*, signified gold; a sense, which it now bears in *Tibet*. That the *Hindus* were in early ages a *commercial* people, we have many reasons to believe; and in the first of their sacred law-tracts, which they suppose to have been revealed

by MENU many *millions* of years ago, we find a curious passage on the legal *interest* of money, and the limited rate of it in different cases, with an exception in regard to *adventures at sea*; an exception, which the sense of mankind approves, and which commerce absolutely requires, though it was not before the reign of CHARLES I. that our own jurisprudence fully admitted it in respect of maritime contracts.

We are told by the *Grecian* writers, that the *Indians* were the wisest of nations; and in moral wisdom, they were certainly eminent: their *Niti Sástra*, or *System of Ethicks*, is yet preserved, and the Fables of VISHNUSERMAN, whom we ridiculously call *Pilpay*, are the most beautiful, if not the most ancient, collection of apologues in the world: they were first translated from the *Sanscrit*, in the *sixth* century, by the order of BUZERCHUMIHR, or *Bright as the Sun*, the chief physician and afterwards *Vezir* of the great ANU'SHIREVA'N, and are extant under various names in more than twenty languages; but their original title is *Hitopadésa*, or *Amicable Instruction*; and, as the very existence of Esop, whom the *Arabs* believe to have been an *Abyssinian*, appears rather doubtful, I am not disinclined to suppose, that the first *moral fables*, which appeared in *Europe*, were of *Indian* or *Ethiopian* origin.



The *Hindus* are said to have boasted of *three* inventions, all of which, indeed, are admirable, the method of instructing by *apologues*, the *decimal scale* adopted now by all civilized nations, and the game of *Chefs*, on which they have some curious treatises ; but, if their numerous works on Grammar, Logick, Rhetorick, Musick, all which are extant and accessible, were explained in some language generally known, it would be found, that they had yet higher pretensions to the praise of a fertile and inventive genius. Their lighter Poems are lively and elegant ; their Epick, magnificent and sublime in the highest degree ; their *Purána's* comprise a series of mythological Histories in blank verse from the *Creation* to the supposed incarnation of BUDDHA ; and their *Védas*, as far as we can judge from that compendium of them, which is called *Upanishat*, abound with noble speculations in metaphysics, and fine discourses on the being and attributes of GOD. Their most ancient medical book, entitled *Cbereca*, is believed to be the work of SIVA ; for each of the divinities in their *Triad* has at least one *sacred* composition ascribed to him ; but, as to mere human works on *History* and *Geography*, though they are said to be extant in *Cashmir*, it has not been yet in my power to procure them. What their *astronomical* and *mathematical* writings contain, will

not, I trust, remain long a secret: they are easily procured, and their importance cannot be doubted. The Philosopher, whose works are said to include a system of the universe founded on the principle of *Attraction* and the *Central* position of the sun, is named YAVAN'ACHA'RYA, because he had travelled, we are told, into *Ionia*: if this be true, he might have been one of those, who conversed with PYTHAGORAS; this at least is undeniable, that a book on astronomy in *Sanscrit* bears the title of *Yavana Jática*, which may signify the *Ionic Sect*; nor is it improbable, that the names of the planets and *Zodiacal* stars, which the *Arabs* borrowed from the *Greeks*, but which we find in the oldest *Indian* records, were originally devised by the same ingenious and enterprising race, from whom both *Greece* and *India* were peopled; the race, who, as DIONYSIUS describes them,

—— ‘ first assayed the deep,  
 ‘ And wafted merchandize to coasts unknown,  
 ‘ Those, who digested first the starry choir,  
 ‘ Their motions mark'd, and call'd them by their names.’

Of these cursory observations on the *Hindus*, which it would require volumes to expand and illustrate, this is the result: that they had an immemorial affinity with the old *Persians*, *Ethiopian*s, and *Egyptians*, the *Phenicians*, *Greeks*,

and *Tuscans*, the *Scythians* or *Goths*, and *Celts*, the *Chinese*, *Japanese*, and *Peruvians*; whence, as no reason appears for believing, that they were a colony from any one of those nations, or any of those nations from them, we may fairly conclude that they all proceeded from some *central* country, to investigate which will be the object of my future Discourses; and I have a sanguine hope, that your collections during the present year will bring to light many useful discoveries; although the departure for *Europe* of a very ingenious member, who first opened the ineffable mine of *Sanscrit* literature, will often deprive us of accurate and solid information concerning the languages and antiquities of *India*.

THE FOURTH  
ANNIVERSARY DISCOURSE,

DELIVERED 15 FEBRUARY, 1787.

BY

THE PRESIDENT.

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GENTLEMEN,

I HAD the honour last year of opening to you my intention, to discourse at our annual meetings on the *five* principal nations, who have peopled the continent and islands of *Afia*; so as to trace, by an historical and philological analysis, the number of ancient stems, from which those five branches have severally sprung, and the central region, from which they appear to have proceeded: you may, therefore, expect, that, having submitted to your consideration a few general remarks on the old inhabitants of *India*, I should now offer my sentiments on some other nation, who, from a similarity of *language, religion, arts, and manners*, may be supposed to have had an early connection with the *Hindus*; but, since we find some *Asiatick* nations totally dissimilar to them in all or most of those particulars, and since the difference will strike you more forcibly by an immediate and close comparison,

I design at present to give a short account of a wonderful people, who seem in every respect so strongly contrasted to the original natives of this country, that they must have been for ages a distinct and separate race.

For the purpose of these discourses, I considered *India* on its largest scale, describing it as lying between *Persia* and *China*, *Tartary* and *Java*; and, for the same purpose, I now apply the name of *Arabia*, as the *Arabian* Geographers often apply it, to that extensive Peninsula, which the Red Sea divides from *Africa*, the great *Assyrian* river from *Iran*, and of which the *Erythrean* Sea washes the base; without excluding any part of its western side, which would be completely maritime, if no isthmus intervened between the *Mediterranean*, and the Sea of *Kolzom*: that country in short I call *Arabia*, in which the *Arabick* language and letters, or such as have a near affinity to them, have been immemorially current.

*Arabia*, thus divided from *India* by a vast ocean, or at least by a broad bay, could hardly have been connected in any degree with this country, until navigation and commerce had been considerably improved: yet, as the *Hindus* and the people of *Yemen* were both commercial nations in a very early age, they were probably the first instruments of conveying to the western

world the gold, ivory, and perfumes of *India*, as well as the fragrant wood, called *alluwwa* in *Arabick* and *aguru* in *Sanscrit*, which grows in the greatest perfection in *Anam* or *Cochinchina*. It is possible too, that a part of the *Arabian* Idolatry might have been derived from the same source with that of the *Hindus*; but such an intercourse may be considered as partial and accidental only; nor am I more convinced, than I was fifteen years ago, when I took the liberty to animadvert on a passage in the History of Prince KANTEMIR, that the *Turks* have any just reason for holding the coast of *Yemen* to be a part of *India*, and calling its inhabitants *Yellow Indians*.

The *Arabs* have never been entirely subdued; nor has any impression been made on them, except on their borders; where, indeed, the *Phœnicians*, *Persians*, *Ethiopians*, *Egyptians*, and, in modern times, the *Othmàn Tartars*, have severally acquired settlements; but, with these exceptions, the natives of *Hejaz* and *Yemen* have preserved for ages the sole dominion of their deserts and pastures, their mountains and fertile valleys: thus, apart from the rest of mankind, this extraordinary people have retained their primitive manners and language, features and character, as long and as remarkably as the *Hindus* themselves. All the genuine *Arabs* of

*Syria* whom I knew in *Europe*, those of *Yemen*, whom I saw in the isle of *Hinzuàn*, whither many had come from *Masfat* for the purpose of trade, and those of *Hejáx*, whom I have met in *Bengal*, form a striking contrast to the *Hindu* inhabitants of these provinces: their eyes are full of vivacity, their speech voluble and articulate, their deportment manly and dignified, their apprehension quick, their minds always present and attentive; with a spirit of independence appearing in the countenances even of the lowest among them. Men will always differ in their ideas of civilization, each measuring it by the habits and prejudices of his own country; but, if courtesy and urbanity, a love of poetry and eloquence, and the practice of exalted virtues be a juster measure of perfect society, we have certain proof, that the people of *Arabia*, both on plains and in cities, in republican and monarchical states, were eminently civilized for many ages before their conquest of *Persia*.

It is deplorable, that the ancient History of this majestic race should be as little known in detail before the time of *Dbü Yezén*, as that of the *Hindus* before *Vieramáditya*; for, although the vast historical work of *Alnuwairí*, and the *Murújuldabab*, or *Golden Meadows*, of *Almasúdi*, contain chapters on the kings of *Himyar*, *Gbasän*, and *Hirab*, with lists of them and

sketches of their several reigns, and although Genealogical Tables, from which chronology might be better ascertained, are prefixed to many compositions of the old *Arabian* Poets, yet most manuscripts are so incorrect, and so many contradictions are found in the best of them, that we can scarce lean upon tradition with security, and must have recourse to the same media for investigating the history of the *Arabs*, that I before adopted in regard to that of the *Indians*; namely, their *language*, *letters* and *religion*, their ancient *monuments*, and the certain remains of their *arts*; on each of which heads I shall touch very concisely, having premised, that my observations will in general be confined to the state of *Arabia* before that singular revolution, at the beginning of the *seventh century*, the effects of which we feel at this day from the *Pyrenean* mountains and the *Danube*, to the farthest parts of the *Indian Empire*, and even to the Eastern Islands.

I. For the knowledge, which any *European*, who pleases, may attain of the *Arabian* language, we are principally indebted to the university of *Leyden*; for, though several *Italians* have assiduously laboured in the same wide field, yet the fruit of their labours has been rendered almost useless by more commodious and more accurate works printed in *Holland*; and, though Pocock certainly accomplished much, and was able to



accomplish any thing, yet the *Academical ease*, which he enjoyed, and his theological pursuits, induced him to leave unfinished the valuable work of *Maidani*, which he had prepared for publication; nor, even if that rich mine of *Arabian* Philology had seen the light, would it have borne any comparison with the fifty dissertations of *Hariri*, which the first ALBERT SCHULTENS translated and explained, though he sent abroad but few of them, and has left his worthy grandson, from whom perhaps *Maidani* also may be expected, the honour of publishing the rest: but the palm of glory in this branch of literature is due to GOLIUS, whose works are equally profound and elegant; so perspicuous in method, that they may always be consulted without fatigue, and read without languor, yet so abundant in matter, that any man, who shall begin with his noble edition of the Grammar compiled by his master ERPENIUS, and proceed, with the help of his incomparable dictionary, to study his History of *Taimur* by *Ibni Arabshâb*, and shall make himself complete master of that sublime work, will understand the learned *Arabick* better than the deepest scholar at *Constantinople* or at *Mecca*. The *Arabick* language, therefore, is almost wholly in our power; and, as it is unquestionably one of the most ancient in the world, so it yields to none ever spoken by mortals in

the number of its words and the precision of its phrases ; but it is equally true and wonderful, that it bears not the least resemblance, either in words or the structure of them, to the *Sanſcrit*, or great parent of the *Indian* dialects ; of which diſſimilarity I will mention two remarkable inſtances : the *Sanſcrit*, like the *Greek*, *Persian*, and *German*, delights in compounds, but, in a much higher degree, and indeed to ſuch exceſs, that I could produce words of more than twenty ſyllables, not formed ludicrously, like that by which the buffoon in ARISTOPHANES deſcribes a feaſt, but with perfect ſeriousneſs, on the moſt ſolemn occaſions, and in the moſt elegant works ; while the *Arabick*, on the other hand, and all its ſiſter dialects, abhor the compoſition of words, and invariably expreſs very complex ideas by circumlocution ; ſo that, if a compound word be found in any genuine language of the *Arabian* Peninſula, (*zenmerdab* for inſtance, which occurs in the *Hamáſab*) it may at once be pronounced an exotick. Again ; it is the genius of the *Sanſcrit*, and other languages of the ſame ſtock, that the roots of verbs be almoſt univerſally *biliteral*, ſo that *five and twenty hundred* ſuch roots might be formed by the compoſition of the *fiſty Indian* letters ; but the *Arabick* roots are as univerſally *triliteral*, ſo that the compoſition of the *twenty-eight Arabian* letters would

give near *two and twenty thousand elements* of the language: and this will demonstrate the surprising extent of it; for, although great numbers of its roots are confessedly lost, and some, perhaps, were never in use, yet, if we suppose ten thousand of them (without reckoning *quadri-literals*) to exist, and each of them to admit only *five* variations, one with another, in forming *derivative nouns*, even then a perfect *Arabick* dictionary ought to contain *fifty thousand* words, each of which may receive a multitude of changes by the rules of grammar. The derivatives in *Sanscrit* are considerably more numerous: but a farther comparison between the two languages is here unnecessary; since, in whatever light we view them, they seem totally distinct, and must have been invented by two different races of men; nor do I recollect a single word in common between them, except *Suruj*, the plural of *Siraj*, meaning both a *lamp* and the *sun*, the *Sanscrit* name of which is, in *Bengal*, pronounced *Surja*; and even this resemblance may be purely accidental. We may easily believe with the *Hindus*, that *not even* INDRA *himself and his heavenly bands, much less any mortal, ever comprehended in his mind such an ocean of words as their sacred language contains*, and with the *Arabs*, that no man uninspired was ever a complete master of *Arabick*: in fact no

person, I believe, now living in *Europe* or *Asia*, can read without study an hundred couplets together in any collection of ancient *Arabian* poems; and we are told, that the great author of the *Kâmûs* learned by accident from the mouth of a child, in a village of *Arabia*, the meaning of three words which he had long sought in vain from grammarians, and from books, of the highest reputation. It is by approximation alone, that a knowledge of these two venerable languages can be acquired; and, with moderate attention, enough of them both may be known, to delight and instruct us in an infinite degree: I conclude this head with remarking, that the nature of the *Ethiopic* dialect seems to prove an early establishment of the *Arabs* in part of *Ethiopia*, from which they were afterwards expelled, and attacked even in their own country by the *Abyssinians*, who had been invited over as auxiliaries against the tyrant of *Yemen* about a century before the birth of MUHAMMED.

Of the characters, in which the old compositions of *Arabia* were written, we know but little; except that the *Koràn* originally appeared in those of *Cusab*, from which the modern *Arabian* letters, with all their elegant variations, were derived, and which unquestionably had a common origin with the *Hebrew* or *Chaldaick*; but, as to the *Himyarick* letters, or those which

we see mentioned by the name of *Almusnad*, we are still in total darkness; the traveller NIEBUHR having been unfortunately prevented from visiting some ancient monuments in *Yemen*, which are said to have inscriptions on them: if those letters bear a strong resemblance to the *Nágarí*, and if a story current in *India* be true, that some *Hindu* merchants heard the *Sanscrit* language spoken in *Arabia the Happy*, we might be confirmed in our opinion, that an intercourse formerly subsisted between the two nations of opposite coasts, but should have no reason to believe, that they sprang from the same immediate stock. The first syllable of *Hamyar*, as many *Europeans* write it, might perhaps induce an Etymologist to derive the *Arabs* of *Yemen* from the great ancestor of the *Indians*; but we must observe, that *Himyar* is the proper appellation of those *Arabs*; and many reasons concur to prove, that the word is purely *Arabick*: the similarity of some proper names on the borders of *India* to those of *Arabia*, as the river *Arabius*, a place called *Araba*, a people named *Aribes* or *Arabies*, and another called *Sabai*, is indeed remarkable, and may hereafter furnish me with observations of some importance, but not at all inconsistent with my present ideas.

II. It is generally asserted, that the old religion of the *Arabs* was entirely *Sabian*; but I can

offer so little accurate information concerning the *Sabian* faith, or even the meaning of the word, that I dare not yet speak on the subject with confidence. This at least is certain, that the people of *Yemen* very soon fell into the common, but fatal, error of adoring the Sun and the Firmament; for even the *third* in descent from YOKTAN, who was consequently as old as NĀHOR, took the surname of ABDUSHAMS, or *Servant of the Sun*; and his family, we are assured, paid particular honours to that luminary: other tribes worshipped the planets and fixed stars; but the religion of the poets at least seems to have been pure Theism; and this we know with certainty, because we have *Arabian* verses of unsuspected antiquity, which contain pious and elevated sentiments on the goodness and justice, the power and omnipresence, of ALLAH, or THE GOD. If an inscription, said to have been found on marble in *Yemen*, be authentick, the ancient inhabitants of that country preserved the religion of EBER, and professed a belief in *miracles and a future state*.

We are also told, that a strong resemblance may be found between the religions of the pagan *Arabs* and the *Hindus*; but, though this may be true, yet an agreement in worshipping the sun and stars will not prove an affinity between the two nations: the powers of God represented as

*female* deities, the adoration of *stones*, and the name of the Idol WUDD, may lead us indeed to suspect, that some of the *Hindu* superstitions had found their way into *Arabia*; and though we have no traces in *Arabian* History of such a conqueror or legislator as the great SESAC, who is said to have raised pillars in *Yemen* as well as at the mouth of the *Ganges*, yet, since we know, that SA'CYA is a title of BUDDHA, whom I suppose to be WODEN, since BUDDHA was not a native of *India*, and since the age of SESAC perfectly agrees with that of SA'CYA, we may form a plausible conjecture, that they were in fact the same person, who travelled eastward from *Ethiopia*, either as a warrior or as a lawgiver, about a thousand years before CHRIST, and whose rites we now see extended as far as the country of *Nifon*, or, as the *Chinese* call it, *Yapuen*, both words signifying the *Rising Sun*. SA'CYA may be derived from a word meaning *power*, or from another denoting *vegetable food*; so that this epithet will not determine, whether he was a hero or a philosopher; but the title BUDDHA, or *wise*, may induce us to believe, that he was rather a benefactor, than a destroyer, of his species: if his religion, however, was really introduced into any part of *Arabia*, it could not have been general in that country; and we may safely pronounce, that before the *Mohammedan*

revolution, the noble and learned *Arabs* were Theists, but that a stupid idolatry prevailed among the lower orders of the people.

I find no trace among them, till their emigration, of any Philosophy but *Ethicks*; and even their system of morals, generous and enlarged as it seems to have been in the minds of a few illustrious chieftains, was on the whole miserably depraved for a century at least before MUHAMMED: the distinguishing virtues, which they boasted of inculcating and practising, were a contempt of riches and even of death; but, in the age of the *Seven Poets*, their liberality had deviated into mad profusion, their courage into ferocity, and their patience into an obstinate spirit of encountering fruitless dangers; but I forbear to expatiate on the manners of the *Arabs* in that age, because the poems, entitled *Almoál-lakát*, which have appeared in our own language, exhibit an exact picture of their virtues and their vices, their wisdom and their folly; and show what may be constantly expected from men of open hearts and boiling passions, with no law to control, and little religion to restrain, them.

III. Few monuments of antiquity are preserved in *Arabia*, and of those few the best accounts are very uncertain; but we are assured, that inscriptions on rocks and mountains are still seen in various parts of the Peninsula;



which, if they are in any known language, and if correct copies of them can be procured, may be decyphered by easy and infallible rules.

The first ALBERT SCHULTENS has preserved in his Ancient Memorials of *Arabia*, the most pleasing of all his works, two little poems in an elegiack strain, which are said to have been found, about the middle of the seventh century, on some fragments of ruined edifices in *Hadramut* near *Aden*, and are supposed to be of an indefinite, but very remote, age. It may naturally be asked: In what characters were they written? Who decyphered them? Why were not the original letters preserved in the book, where the verses are cited? What became of the marbles, which *Abdurrabman*, then governor of *Yemen*, most probably sent to the *Khalifah* at *Bagdad*? If they be genuine, they prove the people of *Yemen* to have been ‘herdsmen and warriors, ‘inhabiting a fertile and well-watered country ‘full of game, and near a fine sea abounding ‘with fish, under a monarchical government, ‘and dressed in green silk or vests of needlework,’ either of their own manufacture or imported from *India*. The measure of these verses is perfectly regular, and the dialect undistinguishable, at least by me, from that of *Kuraisb*; so that, if the *Arabian* writers were much addicted to literary impostures, I should strongly suspect

them to be modern compositions on the instability of human greatness, and the consequences of irreligion, illustrated by the example of the *Himyarick* princes; and the same may be suspected of the first poem quoted by SCHULTENS, which he ascribes to an *Arab* in the age of SOLOMON.

The supposed houses of the people called *Tbamùd* are also still to be seen in excavations of rocks; and, in the time of TABRIZI the Grammarian, a castle was extant in *Yemen*, which bore the name of ALADBAR, an old bard and warrior, who first, we are told, formed his army, thence called *álkbamis*, in five parts, by which arrangement he defeated the troops of *Himyar* in an expedition against *Sanàd*.

Of pillars erected by SESAC, after his invasion of *Yemen*, we find no mention in *Arabian* histories; and, perhaps, the story has no more foundation than another told by the *Greeks* and adopted by NEWTON, that the *Arabs* worshipped URANIA, and even BACCHUS by name, which, they say, means *great* in *Arabick*: but where they found such a word, we cannot discover: it is true, that *Beccab* signifies a *great and tumultuous crowd*, and, in this sense, is one name of the sacred city commonly called *Meccab*.

The *Cábab*, or *quadrangular* edifice at *Meccab*, is indisputably so ancient, that its original

use, and the name of its builder, are lost in a cloud of idle traditions. An *Arab* told me gravely, that it was raised by ABRAHAM, who, as I assured him, was never there : others ascribe it, with more probability, to ISMAIL, or one of his immediate descendants ; but whether it was built as a place of divine worship, as a fortress, as a sepulchre, or as a monument of the treaty between the old possessors of *Arabia* and the sons of KIDAR, antiquaries may dispute, but no mortal can determine. It is thought by RELAND to have been *the mansion of some ancient Patriarch, and revered on that account by his posterity* ; but the room, in which we now are assembled, would contain the whole *Arabian* edifice ; and, if it were large enough for the dwelling-house of a patriarchal family, it would seem ill adapted to the pastoral manners of the *Kedarites* : a *Persian* author insists, that the true name of *Meccah* is *Mahcadah*, or the *Temple of the Moon* ; but, although we may smile at his etymology, we cannot but think it probable, that the *Cábah* was originally designed for religious purposes. Three couplets are cited in an *Arabick* History of this Building, which, from their extreme simplicity, have less appearance of imposture than other verses of the same kind : they are ascribed to ASAD, a *Tobbá*, or king by succession, who is generally allowed to have reign-

ed in *Yemen* an hundred and twenty-eight years before CHRIST's birth, and they commemorate, without any poetical imagery, the magnificence of the prince *in covering the holy temple with striped cloth and fine linen, and in making keys for its gate.* This temple, however, the sanctity of which was restored by MUHAMMED, had been strangely profaned at the time of his birth, when it was usual to decorate its walls with poems on all subjects, and often on the triumphs of *Arabian* gallantry and the praises of *Grecian* wine, which the merchants of *Syria* brought for sale into the deserts.

From the want of materials on the subject of *Arabian* antiquity, we find it very difficult to fix the Chronology of the *Ismailites* with accuracy beyond the time of ADNAN, from whom the impostor was descended in the *twenty-first* degree; and, although we have genealogies of ALKAMAH and other *Himyarick* bards as high as the *thirtieth* degree, or for a period of *nine hundred* years at least, yet we can hardly depend on them so far, as to establish a complete chronological system: by reasoning downwards, however, we may ascertain some points of considerable importance. The universal tradition of *Yemen* is, that YOKTAN, the son of EBER, first settled his family in that country; which settlement, by the computation admitted in *Europe*,

must have been above *three thousand six hundred* years ago, and nearly at the time, when the *Hindus*, under the conduct of RAMA, were subduing the first inhabitants of these regions, and extending the *Indian Empire* from *Ayódbyà* or *Audb* as far as the isle of *Sinbal* or *Silàn*. According to this calculation, NUUMAN, king of *Yemen* in the *ninth* generation from EBER, was contemporary with JOSEPH; and, if a verse composed by that prince, and quoted by ABULFEDA, was really preserved, as it might easily have been, by oral tradition, it proves the great antiquity of the *Arabian* language and metre. This is a literal version of the couplet: ‘When  
 ‘ thou, who art in power, conductest affairs with  
 ‘ courtesy, thou attainest the high honours of  
 ‘ those, who are most exalted, *and* whose man-  
 ‘ dates are obeyed.’ We are told, that, from an elegant verb in this distich, the royal poet acquired the surname of *Almuááfer*, or the *Courteous*. Now the reasons for believing this verse genuine are its brevity, which made it easy to be remembered, and the good sense comprized in it, which made it become proverbial; to which we may add, that the dialect is apparently old, and differs in three words from the idiom of *Hejáx*: the reasons for doubting are, that sentences and verses of indefinite antiquity are sometimes ascribed by the *Arabs* to particular

persons of eminence; and they even go so far as to cite a pathetick elegy of ADAM himself on the death of ABEL, but in very good *Arabick* and correct measure. Such are the doubts, which necessarily must arise on such a subject; yet we have no need of ancient monuments or traditions to prove all that our analysis requires, namely, that the *Arabs*, both of *Hejáz* and *Yemen*, sprang from a stock entirely different from that of the *Hindus*, and that their first establishments in the respective countries, where we now find them, were nearly coeval.

I cannot finish this article without observing, that, when the King of *Denmark's* ministers instructed the *Danish* travellers to collect *historical* books in *Arabick*, but not to busy themselves with procuring *Arabian* poems, they certainly were ignorant, that the only monuments of old *Arabian* History are collections of poetical pieces and the commentaries on them; that all memorable transactions in *Arabia* were recorded in verse; and that more certain facts may be known by reading the *Hamásab*, the *Diwán* of *Hudbail*, and the valuable work of *Obaidullab*, than by turning over a hundred volumes in prose, unless indeed those poems are cited by the historians as their authorities.

IV. The manners of the *Hejází* *Arabs*, which

have continued, we know, from the time of SOLOMON to the present age, were by no means favourable to the cultivation of *arts*; and, as to *sciences*, we have no reason to believe, that they were acquainted with any; for the mere amusement of giving names to stars, which were useful to them in their pastoral or predatory rambles through the deserts, and in their observations on the weather, can hardly be considered as a material part of astronomy. The only arts, in which they pretended to excellence (I except horsemanship and military accomplishments) were *poetry* and *rbetorick*: that we have none of their compositions in prose before the *Koràn*, may be ascribed, perhaps, to the little skill, which they seem to have had, in writing; to their predilection in favour of poetical measure, and to the facility, with which verses are committed to memory; but all their stories prove, that they were eloquent in a high degree, and possessed wonderful powers of speaking without preparation in flowing and forcible periods. I have never been able to discover, what was meant by their books, called *Rawásim*, but suppose, that they were collections of their common, or customary, law. Writing was so little practised among them, that their old poems, which are now accessible to us, may almost be considered

as originally unwritten; and I am inclined to think, that SAMUEL JOHNSON'S reasoning, on the extreme imperfection of unwritten languages, was too general; since a language, that is only spoken, may nevertheless be highly polished by a people, who, like the ancient *Arabs*, make the improvement of their idiom a national concern, appoint solemn assemblies for the purpose of displaying their poetical talents, and hold it a duty to exercise their children in getting by heart their most approved compositions.

The people of *Yemen* had possibly more *mechanical arts*, and, perhaps, more *science*; but, although their ports must have been the emporia of considerable commerce between *Egypt* and *India* or part of *Persia*, yet we have no certain proofs of their proficiency in navigation or even in manufactures. That the *Arabs* of the desert had musical instruments, and names for the different notes, and that they were greatly delighted with melody, we know from themselves; but their lutes and pipes were probably very simple, and their musick, I suspect, was little more than a natural and tuneful recitation of their elegiack verses and love-songs. The singular property of their language, in shunning compound words, may be urged, according to BACON'S idea, as a proof, that they had made



no progress in *arts*, ‘ which require, says he, a variety of combinations to express the complex notions arising from them ;’ but the singularity may perhaps be imputed wholly to the genius of the language, and the taste of those, who spoke it ; since the old *Germans*, who knew no art, appear to have delighted in compound words, which poetry and oratory, one would conceive, might require as much as any meaner art whatsoever.

So great, on the whole, was the strength of parts or capacity, either natural or acquired from habit, for which the *Arabs* were ever distinguished, that we cannot be surprized, when we see that blaze of genius, which they displayed, as far as their arms extended, when they burst, like their own dyke of *Arim*, through their ancient limits, and spread, like an inundation, over the great empire of *Iràn*. That a race of *Táxis*, or *Courfers* as the *Persians* call them, ‘ who drank the milk of camels and fed on lizards, should entertain a thought of subduing the kingdom of FERIDUN’ was considered by the General of YEZDEGIRD’s army as the strongest instance of fortune’s levity and mutability ; but FIRDAUSI, a complete master of *Asiatick* manners, and singularly impartial, represents the *Arabs*, even in the age of FERIDUN, as ‘ disclaiming

‘ any kind of dependence on that monarch, exult-  
‘ ing in their liberty, delighting in eloquence,  
‘ acts of liberality, and martial achievements,  
‘ and thus making the whole earth, says the poet,  
‘ red as wine with the blood of their foes, and  
‘ the air like a forest of canes with their tall  
‘ spears.’ With such a character they were  
likely to conquer any country, that they could  
invade ; and, if ALEXANDER had invaded their  
dominions, they would unquestionably have  
made an obstinate, and probably a successful,  
resistance.

But I have detained you too long, gentlemen,  
with a nation, who have ever been my favourites,  
and hope at our next anniversary meeting to travel  
with you over a part of *Asia*, which exhibits a  
race of men distinct both from the *Hindus* and  
from the *Arabs*. In the mean time it shall be  
my care to superintend the publication of your  
transactions, in which, if the learned in *Europe*  
have not raised their expectations too high, they  
will not, I believe, be disappointed : my own  
imperfect essays I always except ; but, though  
my other engagements have prevented my at-  
tendance on your society for the greatest part  
of last year, and I have set an example of that  
freedom from restraint, without which no so-  
ciety can flourish, yet, as my few hours of leisure

will now be devoted to *Sanscrit* literature, I cannot but hope, though my chief object be a knowledge of *Hindu* Law, to make some discovery in other sciences, which I shall impart with humility, and which you will, I doubt not, receive with indulgence.

THE FIFTH  
ANNIVERSARY DISCOURSE,

DELIVERED 21 FEBRUARY, 1788.

BY

THE PRESIDENT.

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AT the close of my last address to you, Gentlemen, I declared my design of introducing to your notice a people of *Asia*, who seemed as different in most respects from the *Hindus* and *Arabs*, as those two nations had been shown to differ from each other; I meant the people, whom we call *Tartars*: but I enter with extreme diffidence on my present subject, because I have little knowledge of the *Tartarian* dialects; and the gross errors of *European* writers on *Asiatick* literature have long convinced me, that no satisfactory account can be given of any nation, with whose language we are not perfectly acquainted. Such evidence, however, as I have procured by attentive reading and scrupulous inquiries, I will now lay before you, interspersing such remarks as I could not but make on that

evidence, and submitting the whole to your impartial decision.

Conformably to the method before adopted in describing *Arabia* and *India*, I consider *Tartary* also, for the purpose of this discourse, on its most extensive scale, and request your attention, whilst I trace the largest boundaries that are assignable to it: conceive a line drawn from the mouth of the *Oby* to that of the *Dnieper*, and, bringing it back eastward across the *Euxine*, so as to include the peninsula of *Krim*, extend it along the foot of *Caucasus*, by the rivers *Cur* and *Aras*, to the *Caspian* lake, from the opposite shore of which follow the course of the '*Jaihun*' and the chain of *Caucasian* hills as far as those of *Imaus*: whence continue the line beyond the *Chinese* wall to the White Mountain and the country of *Yetsu*; skirting the borders of *Persia*, *India*, *China*, *Corea*, but including part of *Russia*, with all the districts which lie between the Glacial sea, and that of *Japan*. M. DE GUIGNES, whose great work on the *Huns* abounds more in solid learning than in rhetorical ornaments, presents us, however, with a magnificent image of this wide region; describing it as a stupendous edifice, the beams and pillars of which are many ranges of lofty hills, and the dome, one prodigious mountain, to which the *Chinese* give the epithet of *Celestial*, with a considerable number

of broad rivers flowing down its sides: if the mansion be so amazingly sublime, the land around it is proportionably extended, but more wonderfully diversified; for some parts of it are incrufted with ice, others parched with inflamed air and covered with a kind of lava; here we meet with immense tracts of sandy deserts and forests almost impenetrable; there, with gardens, groves, and meadows, perfumed with musk, watered by numberless rivulets, and abounding in fruits and flowers; and, from east to west, lie many considerable provinces, which appear as valleys in comparison of the hills towering above them, but in truth are the flat summits of the highest mountains in the world, or at least the highest in *Asia*. Near one fourth in latitude of this extraordinary region is in the same charming climate with *Greece, Italy, and Provence*; and another fourth in that of *England, Germany, and the northern parts of France*; but the *Hyperborean* countries can have few beauties to recommend them, at least in the present state of the earth's temperature: to the south, on the frontiers of *Iran* are the beautiful vales of *Soghd* with the celebrated cities of *Samarkand* and *Bokbárà*; on those of *Tibet* are the territories of *Cashghar, Kboten, Cbegil* and *Khátà*, all famed for perfumes and for the beauty of their inhabitants; and on those of *China* lies the coun-

try of *Cbin*, anciently a powerful kingdom, which name, like that of *Kbátà*, has in modern times been given to the whole *Cbinese* empire, where such an appellation would be thought an insult. We must not omit the fine territory of *Tancùt*, which was known to the *Greeks* by the name of *Serica*, and considered by them as the farthest eastern extremity of the habitable globe.

*Scythia* seems to be the general name, which the ancient *Europeans* gave to as much as they knew of the country thus bounded and described; but, whether that word be derived, as *PLINY* seems to intimate, from *Sacai*, a people known by a similar name to the *Greeks* and *Persians*, or, as *BRYANT* imagines, from *Cutbia*, or, as Colonel *VALLANCEY* believes, from words denoting *navigation*, or, as it might have been supposed, from a *Greek* root implying *wrath* and ferocity, this at least is certain, that as *India*, *Cbina*, *Persia*, *Japan*, are not appellations of those countries in the languages of the nations, who inhabit them, so neither *Scythia* nor *Tartary* are names, by which the inhabitants of the country now under our consideration have ever distinguished themselves. *Tá-tárisàn* is, indeed, a word used by the *Persians* for the south-western part of *Scythia*, where the musk-deer is said to be common; and the name *Tátar* is by some considered as that of a parti-

cular tribe ; by others, as that of a small river only ; while *Tùràn*, as opposed to *Iràn*, seems to mean the ancient dominion of *AFRA'SIAB* to the north and east of the *Oxus*. There is nothing more idle than a debate concerning names, which after all are of little consequence, when our ideas are distinct without them : having given, therefore, a correct notion of the country, which I proposed to examine, I shall not scruple to call it by the general name of *Tartary* ; though I am conscious of using a term equally improper in the pronunciation and the application of it.

*Tartary* then, which contained, according to *PLINY*, *an innumerable multitude of nations*, by whom the rest of *Asia* and all *Europe* has in different ages been over-run, is denominated, as various images have presented themselves to various fancies, the *great hive of the northern swarms*, the *nursery of irresistible legions*, and, by a stronger metaphor, the *foundery of the human race* ; but *M. BAILLY*, a wonderfully ingenious man and a very lively writer, seems first to have considered it as the *cradle of our species*, and to have supported an opinion, that the whole ancient world was enlightened by sciences brought from the most northern parts of *Scythia*, particularly from the banks of the *Jenisea*, or from the *Hyperborean* regions : all



the fables of old *Greece, Italy, Persia, India*, he derives from the north; and it must be owned, that he maintains his paradox with acuteness and learning. Great learning and great acuteness, together with the charms of a most engaging style, were indeed necessary to render even tolerable a system, which places an earthly paradise, the gardens of *Hesperus*, the islands of the *Macares*, the groves of *Elysium*, if not of *Eden*, the heaven of *INDRA*, the *Peristàn*, or fairy-land, of the *Persian* poets, with its city of diamonds and its country of *Sbádcàm*, so named from *Pleasure* and *Love*, not in any climate, which the common sense of mankind considers as the seat of delights, but beyond the mouth of the *Oby*, in the Frozen Sea, in a region equalled only by that, where the wild imagination of *DANTE* led him to fix the worst of criminals in a state of punishment after death, and of which *he could not, he says, even think without shivering*. A very curious passage in a tract of *PLUTARCH* on *the figure in the Moon's orb*, naturally induced *M. BAILLY* to place *Ogygia* in the north, and he concludes that island, as others have concluded rather fallaciously, to be the *Atlantis* of *PLATO*, but is at a loss to determine, whether it was *Iseland* or *Grænlând*, *Spitzberg* or *New Zembla*: among so many charms it was difficult, indeed, to give a pre-

ference ; but our philofopher, though as much perplexed by an option of beauties as the fhepherd of *Ida*, feems on the whole to think *Zembla* the moft worthy of the *golden fruit* ; becaufe it is indisputably an ifland, and lies oppofite to a gulph near a continent, from which a great number of rivers defcend into the ocean. He appears equally diftrefled among five nations, real and imaginary, to fix upon that, which the *Greeks* named *Atlantes* ; and his conclufion in both cafes muft remind us of the showman at *Eton*, who, having pointed out in his box all the crowned heads of the world, and being asked by the fchoolboys, who looked through the glafs, which was the Emperor, which the Pope, which the Sultan, and which the Great Mogul, answered eagerly, ‘ which you please, young gentlemen, which you please.’ His letters, however, to *VOLTAIRE*, in which he unfolds his new fyftem to his friend, whom he had not been able to convince, are by no means to be derided ; and his general propofition, that arts and fciences had their fource in *Tartary*, deferves a longer examination than can be given to it in this difcourfe : I fhall, neverthelefs, with your permiffion, fhortly difcufs the queftion under the feveral heads, that will prefent themfelves in order.

Although we may naturally fuppoſe, that the

numberless communities of *Tartars*, some of whom are established in great cities, and some encamped on plains in ambulatory mansions, which they remove from pasture to pasture, must be as different in their features as in their dialects, yet, among those who have not emigrated into another country and mixed with another nation, we may discern a family likeness, especially in their eyes and countenance, and in that configuration of lineaments, which we generally call a *Tartar* face; but, without making anxious inquiries, whether all the inhabitants of the vast region before described have similar features, we may conclude from those, whom we have seen, and from the original portraits of *TAIMUR* and his descendants, that the *Tartars* in general differ wholly in complexion and countenance from the *Hindus* and from the *Arabs*; an observation, which tends in some degree to confirm the account given by modern *Tartars* themselves of their descent from a common ancestor. Unhappily their lineage cannot be proved by authentick pedigrees or historical monuments; for all their writings extant, even those in the *Mogul* dialect, are long subsequent to the time of *MUHAMMED*; nor is it possible to distinguish their genuine traditions from those of the *Arabs*, whose religious opinions they have in general adopted. At the beginning of the

fourteenth century, *Khwájah* RASHÍ'D, surnamed FAD'LU'LLAH, a native of *Kazvin*; compiled his account of the *Tartars* and *Mongals* from the papers of one PU'LA'D, whom the great grandson of HOLACU' had sent into *Tátáristán* for the sole purpose of collecting historical information; and the commission itself shows, how little the *Tartarian* Princes really knew of their own origin. From this work of RASHÍ'D, and from other materials, ABU'LGHA'ZÍ, King of *Khwárezm*, composed in the *Mogul* language his *Genealogical History*, which, having been purchased from a merchant of *Bokhárá* by some *Swedish* officers, prisoners of war in *Siberia*, has found its way into several *European* tongues: it contains much valuable matter, but, like all MUHAMMEDAN histories, exhibits tribes or nations as individual sovereigns; and, if Baron DE TOTT had not strangely neglected to procure a copy of the *Tartarian* history, for the original of which he unnecessarily offered a large sum, we should probably have found, that it begins with an account of the deluge taken from the *Korán*, and proceeds to rank TURC, CHÍN, TATA'R, and MONGAL, among the sons of YA'FET. The genuine traditional history of the *Tartars*, in all the books that I have inspected, seems to begin with OGHU'Z, as that of the *Hindus* does with RAMA: they place their miraculous Hero and

Patriarch *four thousand* years before CHENGIZ KHAN, who was born in the year 1164, and with whose reign their historical period commences. It is rather surprizing, that M. BAILLY, who makes frequent appeals to Etymological arguments, has not derived OGYGES from OGHU'Z and ATLAS from *Altai*, or the *Golden mountain of Tartary*: the *Greek* terminations might have been rejected from both words; and a mere transposition of letters is no difficulty with an Etymologist.

My remarks in this address, gentlemen, will be confined to the period preceding CHENGIZ; and, although the learned labours of M. DE GUIGNES and the fathers VISDELOU, DEMAILLA, and GAUBIL, who have made an incomparable use of their *Chinese* literature, exhibit probable accounts of the *Tartars* from a very early age, yet the old historians of *China* were not only foreign, but generally hostile, to them, and for both those reasons, either through ignorance or malignity, may be suspected of misrepresenting their transactions: if they speak truth, the ancient history of the *Tartars* presents us, like most other histories, with a series of assassinations, plots, treasons, massacres, and all the natural fruits of selfish ambition. I should have no inclination to give you a sketch of such horrors, even if the occasion called for it; and will

barely observe, that the first king of the *Hyumnu's* or *Huns* began his reign, according to VISDELOU, about *three thousand five hundred and sixty years ago*, not long after the time fixed in my former discourses for the first regular establishments of the *Hindus* and *Arabs* in their several countries.

I. Our first inquiry, concerning the *languages* and *letters* of the *Tartars*, presents us with a deplorable void, or with a prospect as barren and dreary as that of their deserts. The *Tartars*, in general, had no literature: (in this point all authorities appear to concur) the *Turcs* had no letters: the *Huns*, according to PROCOPIUS, had not even heard of them: the magnificent CHENGIZ, whose Empire included an area of near eighty square degrees, could find none of his own *Mongals*, as the best authors inform us, able to write his dispatches; and TAI'MU'R, a savage of strong natural parts and passionately fond of hearing histories read to him, could himself neither write nor read. It is true, that IBNU ARABSHAH mentions a set of characters called *Dilberjin*, which were used in *Kbátà*: 'he had seen them, he says, and found them to consist of *forty-one* letters, a distinct symbol being appropriated to each long and short vowel, and to each consonant hard or soft, or otherwise varied in pronunciation;' but *Kbátà* was in southern *Tartary* on the confines of *India*; and,

from his description of the characters there in use, we cannot but suspect them to have been those of *Tibet*, which are manifestly *Indian*, bearing a greater resemblance to those of *Bengal* than to *Dévanágarí*. The learned and eloquent *Arab* adds, ' that the *Tatars* of *Kbátà* write, in the *Dilberjin* letters, all their tales and histories, their journals, poems, and miscellanies, their diplomas, records of state and justice, the laws of CHENGIZ, their publick registers and their compositions of every species: ' if this be true, the people of *Kbátà* must have been a polished and even a lettered nation; and it may be true, without affecting the general position, that the *Tartars* were illiterate; but IBNU ARABSHA'H was a professed rhetorician, and it is impossible to read the original passage, without full conviction that his object in writing it, was to display his power of words in a flowing and modulated period. He says further, that in *Jagbatái* the people of *Oighür*, as he calls them, ' have a system of fourteen letters only, denominated from themselves *Oighürí*; ' and those are the characters, which the *Mongals* are supposed by most authors to have borrowed: ABU'L'GHAZI' tells us only, that CHENGIZ employed the natives of *Eighür* as excellent penmen; but the *Chinese* assert, that he was forced to employ them, because he had no writers at all

among his natural-born subjects; and we are assured by many, that KUBLAIKHA'N ordered letters to be invented for his nation by a *Tibetian*, whom he rewarded with the dignity of chief *Lama*. The small number of *Eighburi* letters might induce us to believe, that they were *Zend* or *Pablavi*, which must have been current in that country, when it was governed by the sons of FERIDU'N; and, if the alphabet ascribed to the *Eighurians* by M. DES HAUTESRAYES be correct, we may safely decide, that in many of its letters it resembles both the *Zend* and the *Syriack*, with a remarkable difference in the mode of connecting them; but, as we can scarce hope to see a genuine specimen of them, our doubt must remain in regard to their form and origin: the page, exhibited by HYDE as *Khatayan* writing, is evidently a sort of broken *Cufick*; and the fine manuscript at *Oxford*, from which it was taken, is more probably a *Mendeian* work on some religious subject than, as he imagined, a code of *Tartarian* laws. That very learned man appears to have made a worse mistake in giving us for *Mongal* characters a page of writing, which has the appearance of *Japanese*, or mutilated *Chinese*, letters.

If the *Tartars* in general, as we have every reason to believe, had no written memorials, it cannot be thought wonderful, that their lan-



*guages*, like those of *America*, should have been in perpetual fluctuation, and that more than fifty dialects, as HYDE had been credibly informed, should be spoken between *Moscow* and *Cbina*, by the many kindred tribes or their several branches, which are enumerated by ABU'LGHA'ZI'. What those dialects are, and whether they really sprang from a common stock, we shall probably learn from Mr. PALLAS, and other indefatigable men employed by the *Russian* court; and it is from the *Russians*, that we must expect the most accurate information concerning their *Asiatick* subjects: I persuade myself, that, if their inquiries be judiciously made and faithfully reported, the result of them will prove, that all the languages properly *Tartarian* arose from one common source; excepting always the jargons of such wanderers or mountaineers, as, having long been divided from the main body of the nation, must in a course of ages have framed separate idioms for themselves. The only *Tartarian* language, of which I have any knowledge, is the *Turkish* of *Constantinople*, which is however so copious, that whoever shall know it perfectly, will easily understand, as we are assured by intelligent authors, the dialects of *Tátáristàn*; and we may collect from ABU'LGHA'ZI', that he would find little difficulty in the *Calmac* and the *Mogul*: I will not offend your ears by a dry ca-

talogue of similar words in those different languages; but a careful investigation has convinced me, that, as the *Indian* and *Arabian* tongues are severally descended from a common parent, so those of *Tartary* might be traced to one ancient stem essentially differing from the two others. It appears, indeed, from a story told by ABU'L-GHA'ZI, that the *Viràts* and the *Mongals* could not understand each other; but no more can the *Danes* and the *English*, yet their dialects beyond a doubt are branches of the same *Gotbick* tree. The dialect of the *Moguls*, in which some histories of TAIMU'R and his descendants were originally composed, is called in *India*, where a learned native set me right when I used another word, *Turci*; not that it is precisely the same with the *Turkish* of the *Othmánlu's*, but the two idioms differ, perhaps, less than *Swedish* and *German*, or *Spanish* and *Portuguese*, and certainly less than *Welsh* and *Irish*: in hope of ascertaining this point, I have long searched in vain for the original works ascribed to TAIMU'R and BA'BER; but all the *Moguls*, with whom I have conversed in this country, resemble the crow in one of their popular fables, who, having long affected to walk like a pheasant, was unable after all to acquire the gracefulness of that elegant bird, and in the mean time unlearned his

own natural gait: they have not learned the dialect of *Persia*, but have wholly forgotten that of their ancestors. A very considerable part of the old *Tartarian* language, which in *Asia* would probably have been lost, is happily preserved in *Europe*; and, if the groundwork of the western *Turkish*, when separated from the *Persian* and *Arabick*, with which it is embellished, be a branch of the lost *Oghúzian* tongue, I can assert with confidence, that it has not the least resemblance either to *Arabick* or *Sanscrit*, and must have been invented by a race of men wholly distinct from the *Arabs* or *Hindus*. This fact alone oversets the system of M. BAILLY, who considers the *Sanscrit*, of which he gives in several places a most erroneous account, as ‘ a fine monument of his primeval Scythians, the preceptors of mankind and planters of a sublime philosophy even in India;’ for he holds it an incontestable truth, that a language, which is dead, supposes a nation, which is destroyed; and he seems to think such reasoning perfectly decisive of the question, without having recourse to astronomical arguments or the spirit of ancient institutions: for my part, I desire no better proof than that, which the language of the *Bráhmans* affords, of an immemorial and total difference between the *Savages of the Mountains*, as the old

*Chinese* justly called the *Tartars*, and the studious, placid, contemplative inhabitants of these *Indian* plains.

II. The *geographical* reasoning of M. BAILLY may, perhaps, be thought equally shallow, if not inconsistent in some degree with itself. ‘An adoration of the sun and of fire, says he, must necessarily have arisen in a cold region: therefore, it must have been foreign to *India*, *Persia*, *Arabia*; therefore, it must have been derived from *Tartary*.’ No man, I believe, who has travelled in winter through *Babâr*, or has even passed a cold season at *Calcutta* within the tropick, can doubt that the solar warmth is often desirable by all, and might have been considered as adorable by the ignorant, in these climates, or that the return of spring deserves all the salutations, which it receives from the *Persian* and *Indian* poets; not to rely on certain historical evidence, that ANTARAH, a celebrated warrior and bard, actually perished with cold on a mountain of *Arabia*. To meet, however, an objection, which might naturally be made to the voluntary settlement, and amazing population, of his primitive race in the icy regions of the north, he takes refuge in the hypothesis of M. BUFFON, who imagines, that our whole globe was at first of a white heat, and has been gradually cooling from the poles to the equator; so that the *Hy-*

*perborean* countries had once a delightful temperature, and *Siberia* itself was even *better than the climate of our temperate zones*, that is, was in too hot a climate, by his first proposition, for the primary worship of the sun. That the temperature of countries has not sustained a change in the lapse of ages, I will by no means insist; but we can hardly reason conclusively from a variation of temperature to the cultivation and diffusion of science: if as many female elephants and tigresses, as we now find in *Bengal*, had formerly littered in the *Siberian* forests, and if their young, as the earth cooled, had sought a genial warmth in the climates of the south, it would not follow, that other savages, who migrated in the same direction and on the same account, brought religion and philosophy, language and writing, art and science, into the southern latitudes.

We are told by *ABU'LGHA'ZI*, that the primitive religion of human creatures, or the pure adoration of One Creator, prevailed in *Tartary* during the first generations from *YAFET*, but was extinct before the birth of *OGHU'Z*, who restored it in his dominions; that, some ages after him, the *Mongals* and the *Turcs* relapsed into gross idolatry; but that *CHENGIZ* was a Theist, and, in a conversation with the *Mubammedan* Doctors, admitted their arguments for

the being and attributes of the Deity to be unanswerable, while he contested the evidence of their Prophet's legation. From old *Grecian* authorities we learn, that the *Massagetæ* worshipped the sun; and the narrative of an embassy from JUSTIN to the *Khákàn*, or Emperor, who then resided in a fine vale near the source of the *Irtiſh*, mentions the *Tartarian* ceremony of purifying the *Roman* Ambassadors by conducting them between two fires: the *Tartars* of that age are represented as adorers of the *four elements*, and believers in an invisible spirit, to whom they sacrificed bulls and rams. Modern travellers relate, that, in the festivals of some *Tartarian* tribes, they pour a few drops of a consecrated liquor on the statues of their Gods; after which an attendant sprinkles a little of what remains three times toward the south in honour of fire, toward the west and east in honour of water and air, and as often toward the north in honour of the earth, which contained the reliques of their deceased ancestors: now all this may be very true, without proving a national affinity between the *Tartars* and *Hindus*; for the *Arabs* adored the planets and the powers of nature, the *Arabs* had carved images, and made libations on a black stone, the *Arabs* turned in prayer to different quarters of the heavens; yet we know with certainty, that the *Arabs* are a distinct race

from the *Tartars*; and we might as well infer, that they were the same people, because they had each their *Nomades*, or *wanderers for pasture*, and because the *Turcmans*, described by IBNU ARABSH'AH and by him called *Tátár's*, are, like *most Arabian* tribes, pastoral and warlike, hospitable and generous, wintering and summering on different plains, and rich in herds and flocks, horses and camels; but this agreement in manners proceeds from the similar nature of their several deserts and their similar choice of a free rambling life, without evincing a community of origin, which they could scarce have had without preserving some remnant at least of a common language.

Many *Lamas*, we are assured, or Priests of BUDDHA, have been found settled in *Siberia*; but it can hardly be doubted, that the *Lamas* had travelled thither from *Tibet*, whence it is more than probable, that the religion of the *Bauddha's* was imported into southern, or *Chinese, Tartary*; since we know, that rolls of *Tibetian* writing have been brought even from the borders of the *Caspian*. The complexion of BUDDHA himself, which, according to the *Hindus*, was *between white and ruddy*, would perhaps have convinced M. BAILLY, had he known the *Indian* tradition, that the last great legislator and God of the East was a *Tartar*;

but the *Chinese* consider him as a native of *India*, the *Brühmans* insist, that he was born in a forest near *Gayá*, and many reasons may lead us to suspect, that his religion was carried from the west and the south to those eastern and northern countries, in which it prevails. On the whole we meet with few or no traces in *Scythia* of *Indian* rites and superstitions, or of that poetical mythology, with which the *Sanscrit* poems are decorated; and we may allow the *Tartars* to have adored the Sun with more reason than any southern people, without admitting them to have been the sole original inventors of that universal folly: we may even doubt the originality of their veneration for the *four elements*, which forms a principal part of the ritual introduced by *ZER'ATUSHT*, a native of *Rai* in *Persia*, born in the reign of *GUSHTASP*, whose son *PASH'UTEN* is believed by the *Parsi's* to have resided long in *Tartary* at a place called *Cangidiz*, where a magnificent palace is said to have been built by the father of *CYRUS*, and where the *Persian* prince, who was a zealot in the new faith, would naturally have disseminated its tenets among the neighbouring *Tartars*.

Of any Philosophy, except natural Ethicks, which the rudest society requires and experience teaches, we find no more vestiges in *Asiatick Scythia* than in ancient *Arabia*; nor would the



name of a Philosopher and a *Scythian* have been ever connected, if ANACHARSIS had not visited *Athens* and *Lydia* for that instruction, which his birthplace could not have afforded him: but ANACHARSIS was the son of a *Grecian* woman, who had taught him her language, and he soon learned to despise his own. He was unquestionably a man of a sound understanding and fine parts; and, among the lively sayings, which gained him the reputation of a wit even in *Greece*, it is related by **DIODES LAERTIUS**, that, when an *Athenian* reproached him with being a *Scythian*, he answered: ‘ my country is, indeed, a disgrace to me, but thou art a disgrace to thy country.’ What his country was, in regard to manners and civil duties, we may learn from his fate in it; for when, on his return from *Athens*, he attempted to reform it by introducing the wise laws of his friend **SOLON**, he was killed on a hunting party with an arrow shot by his own brother, a *Scythian* Chieftain. Such was the philosophy of **M. BAILLY**’s *Atlantes*, the first and most enlightened of nations! We are assured, however, by the learned author of the *Dabistan*, that the *Tartars* under **CHENGIZ** and his descendants were lovers of truth; and would not even preserve their lives by a violation of it: **DE GUIGNES** ascribes the same veracity, the parent of all virtues, to the *Huns*;

and STRABO, who might only mean to lash the *Greeks* by praising Barbarians, as HORACE extolled the wandering *Scythians* merely to satirize his luxurious countrymen, informs us, that the nations of *Scythia* deserved the praise due to wisdom, heroick friendship, and justice; and this praise we may readily allow them on his authority, without supposing them to have been the preceptors of mankind.

As to the laws of ZAMOLXIS, concerning whom we know as little as of the *Scythian* DEUCALION, or of ABARIS the *Hyperborean*, and to whose story even HERODOTUS gave no credit, I lament, for many reasons, that, if ever they existed, they have not been preserved: it is certain, that a system of laws, called *Yásác*, has been celebrated in *Tartary* since the time of CHENGIZ, who is said to have republished them in his empire, as his institutions were afterwards adopted and enforced by TAIMU'R; but they seem to have been a common, or traditionary, law, and were probably not reduced into writing, till CHENGIZ had conquered a nation, who were able to write.

III. Had the religious opinions and allegorical fables of the *Hindus* been actually borrowed from *Scythia*, travellers must have discovered in that country some ancient monuments of them, such as pieces of grotesque sculpture, images of

the Gods and *Avatárs*, and inscriptions on pillars or in caverns, analogous to those, which remain in every part of the western peninsula, or to those, which many of us have seen in *Babár* and at *Banáras*; but (except a few detached idols) the only great monuments of *Tartarian* antiquity are a line of ramparts on the west and east of the *Caspian*, ascribed indeed by ignorant *Muselmans* to *Yájúj* and *Májúj*, or *Gog* and *Magog*, that is to the *Scythians*, but manifestly raised by a very different nation in order to stop their predatory inroads through the passes of *Caucasus*. The *Chinese* wall was built or finished, on a similar construction and for a similar purpose, by an Emperor, who died only two hundred and ten years before the beginning of our era; and the other mounds were very probably constructed by the old *Persians*, though, like many works of unknown origin, they are given to *SEKANDER*, not the *Macedonian*, but a more ancient Hero supposed by some to have been *JEMSHÍD*. It is related, that pyramids and tombs have been found in *Tátáristán*, or western *Scythia*, and some remnants of edifices in the lake *Saisan*; that vestiges of a deserted city have been recently discovered by the *Russians* near the *Caspian* sea, and the Mountain of Eagles; and that golden ornaments and utensils, figures of elks and other quadrupeds in metal, weapons of

various kinds, and even implements for mining, but made of copper instead of iron, have been dug up in the country of the *Tsbüdes*; whence M. BAILLY infers, with great reason, the high antiquity of that people: but the high antiquity of the *Tartars*, and their establishment in that country near four thousand years ago, no man disputes; we are inquiring into their ancient religion and philosophy, which neither ornaments of gold, nor tools of copper, will prove to have had an affinity with the religious rites and the sciences of *India*. The golden utensils might possibly have been fabricated by the *Tartars* themselves; but it is possible too, that they were carried from *Rome* or from *China*, whence occasional embassies were sent to the Kings of *Eighür*. Towards the end of the tenth century the *Chinese* Emperor dispatched an ambassador to a Prince, named ERSLAN, which, in the *Turkish* of *Constantinople*, signifies a lion, who resided near the Golden Mountain in the same station, perhaps, where the *Romans* had been received in the middle of the sixth century; the *Chinese* on his return home reported the *Eighüris* to be a grave people, with fair complexions, diligent workmen, and ingenious artificers not only in gold, silver, and iron, but in jasper and fine stones; and the *Romans* had before described their magnificent reception in a rich palace

adorned with *Chinese* manufactures: but these times were comparatively modern; and, even if we should admit, that the *Eighüris*, who are said to have been governed for a period of two thousand years by an *Idecüt*, or sovereign of their own race, were in some very early age a literary and polished nation, it would prove nothing in favour of the *Huns*, *Turcs*, *Mongals*, and other savages to the north of *Pekin*, who seem in all ages, before MUHAMMED, to have been equally ferocious and illiterate.

Without actual inspection of the manuscripts, that have been found near the *Caspian*, it would be impossible to give a correct opinion concerning them; but one of them, described as written on blue silky paper in letters of gold and silver not unlike *Hebrew*, was probably a *Tibetian* composition of the same kind with that, which lay near the source of the *Irtish*, and of which CASSIANO I believe, made the first accurate version: another, if we may judge from the description of it, was probably modern *Turkish*; and none of them could have been of great antiquity.

IV. From ancient monuments, therefore, we have no proof, that the *Tartars* were themselves well-instructed, much less that they instructed the world; nor have we any stronger reason to conclude from their general man-

ners and character, that they had made an early proficiency in *arts* and *sciences*: even of poetry, the most universal and most natural of the fine arts, we find no genuine specimens ascribed to them, except some horrible warfongs expressed in *Persian* by ALI' of *Yezd*, and possibly invented by him. After the conquest of *Persia* by the *Mongals*, their princes, indeed, encouraged learning, and even made astronomical observations at *Samarkand*; as the *Turcs* became polished by mixing with the *Persians* and *Arabs*, though *their very nature*, as one of their own writers confesses, *had before been like an incurable distemper, and their minds clouded with ignorance*: thus also the *Mancheu* monarchs of *Cbina* have been patrons of the learned and ingenious, and the Emperor TIEN-LONG is, if he be now living, a fine *Cbinese* poet. In all these instances the *Tartars* have resembled the *Romans*, who, before they had subdued *Greece*, were little better than tigers in war, and *Fauns* or *Sylvans* in science and art.

Before I left *Europe*, I had insisted in conversation, that the *Tuzuc*, translated by Major DAVY, was never written by TAIMU'R himself, at least not as CÆSAR wrote his commentaries, for one very plain reason, that no *Tartarian* king of his age could write at all; and, in support of my opinion, I had cited IBNU ARABSHA'H, who,

though justly hostile to the savage, by whom his native city, *Damascus*, had been ruined, yet praises his talents and the real greatness of his mind, but adds: "He was wholly illiterate; he neither read nor wrote any thing; and he knew nothing of *Arabick*; though of *Persian*, *Turkish*, and the *Mogul* dialect, he knew as much as was sufficient for his purpose, and no more: he used with pleasure to hear histories read to him, and so frequently heard the same book, that he was able by memory to correct an inaccurate reader." This passage had no effect on the translator, whom *great and learned men in India had assured*, it seems, *that the work was authentick*, by which he meant *composed by the conqueror himself*: but the *great* in this country might have been *unlearned*, or the *learned* might not have been *great* enough to answer any leading question in a manner that opposed the declared inclination of a *British* inquirer; and, in either case, since no witnesses are named, so general a reference to them will hardly be thought conclusive evidence. On my part, I will name a *Muselman*, whom we all know, and who has enough both of *greatness* and of *learning* to decide the question both impartially and satisfactorily: the *Nawwâb* MOZAFFER JANG informed me of his own accord, that no man of sense in *Hindustan* believed the work to have

been composed by TAIMUR, but that his favourite, surnamed HINDU SHAH, was known to have written that book and others ascribed to his patron, after many confidential discourses with the *Emir*, and, perhaps, nearly in the Prince's words as well as in his person; a story, which ALI of *Yezd*, who attended the court of TAIMUR, and has given us a flowery panegyrick instead of a history, renders highly probable, by confirming the latter part of the *Arabian* account, and by total silence as to the literary productions of his master. It is true, that a very ingenious but indigent native, whom DAVY supported, has given me a written memorial on the subject, in which he mentions TAIMUR as the author of two works in *Turkish*; but the credit of his information is overset by a strange apocryphal story of a king of *Yemen*, who invaded, he says, the *Emir's* dominions, and in whose library the manuscript was afterwards found, and translated by order of ALISHIR, first minister of TAIMUR's grandson; and Major DAVY himself, before he departed from *Bengal*, told me, that he was greatly perplexed by finding in a very accurate and old copy of the *Tuzuc*, which he designed to republish with considerable additions, a particular account, written unquestionably by TAIMUR, of his own death. No evidence, therefore, has been adduced to shake my opinion,



that, the *Moguls* and *Tartars*, before their conquest of *India* and *Persia*, were wholly unlettered; although it may be possible, that, even without art or science, they had, like the *Huns*, both warriors and lawgivers in their own country some centuries before the birth of CHRIST.

If learning was ever anciently cultivated in the regions to the north of *India*, the seats of it, I have reason to suspect, must have been *Eighur*, *Cashghar*, *Kbatà*, *Chin*, *Tancùt*, and other countries of *Chinese Tartary*, which lie between the thirty-fifth and forty-fifth degrees of northern latitude; but I shall, in another discourse, produce my reasons for supposing, that those very countries were peopled by a race allied to the *Hindus*, or enlightened at least by their vicinity to *India* and *China*; yet in *Tancùt*, which by some is annexed to *Tibet*, and even among its old inhabitants, the *Seres*, we have no certain accounts of uncommon talents or great improvements: they were famed, indeed, for the faithful discharge of moral duties, for a pacifick disposition, and for that longevity, which is often the reward of patient virtues and a calm temper; but they are said to have been wholly indifferent, in former ages, to the elegant arts and even to commerce; though FADLU'LLAH had been informed, that, near the close of the *thirteenth* century, many

branches of natural philosophy were cultivated in *Cam-cheu*, then the metropolis of *Serica*.

We may readily believe those, who assure us, that some tribes of wandering *Tartars* had real skill in applying herbs and minerals to the purposes of medicine, and pretended to skill in magick; but the general character of their nation seems to have been this: they were professed hunters or fishers, dwelling on that account in forests or near great rivers, under huts or rude tents, or in waggons drawn by their cattle from station to station; they were dextrous archers, excellent horsemen, bold combatants, appearing often to flee in disorder for the sake of renewing their attack with advantage; drinking the milk of mares, and eating the flesh of colts; and thus in many respects resembling the old *Arabs*, but in nothing more than in their love of intoxicating liquors, and in nothing less than in a taste for poetry and the improvement of their language.

Thus has it been proved, and, in my humble opinion, beyond controversy, that the far greater part of *Asia* has been peopled and immemorially possessed by three considerable nations, whom, for want of better names, we may call *Hindus*, *Arabs*, and *Tartars*; each of them divided and subdivided into an infinite number of branches, and all of them so different in form and features,

language, manners and religion, that, if they sprang originally from a common root, they must have been separated for ages: whether more than three primitive stocks can be found, or, in other words, whether the *Chinese*, *Japanese*, and *Persians*, are entirely distinct from them, or formed by their intermixture, I shall hereafter, if your indulgence to me continue, diligently inquire. To what conclusions these inquiries will lead, I cannot yet clearly discern; but, if they lead to truth, we shall not regret our journey through this dark region of ancient history, in which, while we proceed step by step, and follow every glimmering of certain light, that presents itself, we must beware of those false rays and luminous vapours, which mislead *Asiatick* travellers by an appearance of water, but are found on a near approach to be deserts of sand.

THE SIXTH  
DISCOURSE;

ON THE

PERSIANS,

DELIVERED 19 FEBRUARY, 1789.

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GENTLEMEN,

I TURN with delight from the vast mountains and barren deserts of *Turàn*, over which we travelled last year with no perfect knowledge of our course, and request you now to accompany me on a literary journey through one of the most celebrated and most beautiful countries in the world; a country, the history and languages of which, both ancient and modern, I have long attentively studied, and on which I may without arrogance promise you more positive information, than I could possibly procure on a nation so disunited and so unlettered as the *Tartars*: I mean that, which *Europeans* improperly call *Persia*, the name of a single province being applied to the whole Empire of *Iràn*, as it is correctly denominated by the present natives of it,

and by all the learned *Muselmans*, who reside in these *British* territories. To give you an idea of its largest boundaries, agreeably to my former mode of describing *India*, *Arabia*, and *Tartary*, between which it lies, let us begin with the source of the great *Assyrian* stream, *Euphrates*, (as the *Greeks*, according to their custom, were pleased to miscall the *Foràt*) and thence descend to its mouth in the Green Sea, or *Persian* Gulf, including in our line some considerable districts and towns on both sides the river; then coasting *Persia*, properly so named, and other *Iranian* provinces, we come to the delta of the *Sindhu* or *Indus*; whence ascending to the mountains of *Casbgbar*, we discover its fountains and those of the *Jaibùn*, down which we are conducted to the *Caspian*, which formerly perhaps it entered, though it lose itself now in the sands and lakes of *Khwárezm*: we next are led from the sea of *Kbozar*, by the banks of the *Cur*, or *Cyrus*; and along the *Caucasian* ridges, to the shore of the *Euxine*, and thence, by the several *Grecian* seas, to the point, whence we took our departure, at no considerable distance from the *Mediterranean*. We cannot but include the lower *Asia* within this outline, because it was unquestionably a part of the *Persian*, if not of the old *Assyrian*, Empire; for we know, that it was under the dominion of *CAIKHOSRAU*; and *DIODORUS*, we

find, asserts, that the kingdom of *Troas* was dependent on *Affyria*, since PRIAM implored and obtained succours from his Emperor TEUTAMES, whose name approaches nearer to TAHMU'RAS, than to that of any other *Affyrian* monarch. Thus may we look on *Iràn* as the noblest *Island*, (for so the *Greeks* and the *Arabs* would have called it), or at least as the noblest *peninsula*, on this habitable globe; and if M. BAILLY had fixed on it as the *Atlantis* of PLATO, he might have supported his opinion with far stronger arguments than any, that he has adduced in favour of *New Zembla*: if the account, indeed, of the *Atlantes* be not purely an *Egyptian*, or an *Utopian*, fable, I should be more inclined to place them in *Iràn* than in any region, with which I am acquainted.

It may seem strange, that the ancient history of so distinguished an Empire should be yet so imperfectly known; but very satisfactory reasons may be assigned for our ignorance of it: the principal of them are the superficial knowledge of the *Greeks* and *Jews*, and the loss of *Persian* archives or historical compositions. That the *Grecian* writers, before XENOPHON, had no acquaintance with *Persia*, and that all their accounts of it are wholly fabulous, is a paradox too extravagant to be seriously maintained; but their connection with it in war or peace had, indeed,

been generally confined to bordering kingdoms under feudatory princes; and the first *Persian* Emperor, whose life and character they seem to have known with tolerable accuracy, was the great CYRUS, whom I call, without fear of contradiction, CAIKHOSRAU; for I shall then only doubt that the KHOSRAU of FIRDAUSI' was the CYRUS of the first *Greek* historian, and the Hero of the oldest political and moral romance, when I doubt that LOUIS *Quatorze* and LEWIS *the Fourteenth* were one and the same *French* King: it is utterly incredible, that two different princes of *Persia* should each have been born in a foreign and hostile territory; should each have been doomed to death in his infancy by his maternal grandfather in consequence of portentous dreams, real or invented; should each have been saved by the remorse of his destined murderer, and should each, after a similar education among herdsmen, as the son of a herdsman, have found means to revisit his paternal kingdom, and having delivered it, after a long and triumphant war, from the tyrant, who had invaded it, should have restored it to the summit of power and magnificence. Whether so romantick a story, which is the subject of an Epick Poem, as majestic and entire as the *Iliad*, be historically true, we may feel perhaps an inclination to doubt; but it cannot with reason be denied,

that the outline of it related to a single Hero, whom the *Asiaticks*, conversing with the father of *European* history, described according to their popular traditions by his true name, which the *Greek* alphabet could not express: nor will a difference of names affect the question; since the *Greeks* had little regard for truth, which they sacrificed willingly to the *Graces* of their language, and the nicety of their ears; and, if they could render foreign words melodious, they were never solicitous to make them exact; hence they probably formed *CAMBYSES* from *CA'MBAKHS*, or *Granting desires*, a title rather than a name, and *XERXES* from *SHI'RU'YI*, a Prince and warrior in the *Sbábnámab*, or from *SHI'RSHA'H*, which might also have been a title; for the *Asiatick* Princes have constantly assumed new titles or epithets at different periods of their lives, or on different occasions; a custom, which we have seen prevalent in our own times both in *Irán* and *Hindustán*, and which has been a source of great confusion even in the scriptural accounts of *Babylonian* occurrences: both *Greeks* and *Jews* have in fact accommodated *Persian* names to their own articulation; and both seem to have disregarded the native literature of *Irán*, without which they could at most attain a general and imperfect knowledge of the country. As to the *Persians* themselves, who were contemporary



with the *Jews* and *Greeks*, they must have been acquainted with the history of their own times, and with the traditional accounts of past ages; but for a reason, which will presently appear, they chose to consider CAYU'MERS as the founder of the empire; and, in the numerous distractions, which followed the overthrow of DA'RA', especially in the great revolution on the defeat of YEZDEGIRD, their civil histories were lost, as those of *India* have unhappily been, from the solicitude of the priests, the only depositaries of their learning, to preserve their books of law and religion at the expense of all others: hence it has happened, that nothing remains of genuine *Persian* history before the dynasty of SA'SA'N, except a few rustick traditions and fables, which furnished materials for the *Sbábnámab*, and which are still supposed to exist in the *Pablavi* language. The annals of the *Pisbdádi*, or *Affyrian*, race must be considered as dark and fabulous; and those of the *Cayáni* family, or the *Medes* and *Persians*, as heroick and poetical; though the lunar eclipses, said to be mentioned by PTOLEMY, fix the time of GUSHTASP, the prince, by whom ZERA'TUSHT was protected: of the *Partbian* kings descended from ARSHAC or ARSACES, we know little more than the names; but the *Sá-sánu's* had so long an intercourse with the Emperors of *Rome* and *Byzantium*, that the period

of their dominion may be called an historical age. In attempting to ascertain the beginning of the *Assyrian* empire, we are deluded, as in a thousand instances, by names arbitrarily imposed: it had been *settled* by chronologers, that the first monarchy established in *Persia* was the *Assyrian*; and NEWTON, finding some of opinion, that it rose in the first century after the Flood, but unable by his own calculations to extend it farther back than *seven hundred and ninety* years before CHRIST, rejected part of the old system and adopted the rest of it; concluding, that the *Assyrian* Monarchs began to reign about two hundred years after SOLOMON, and that, in all preceding ages, the government of *Iran* had been divided into several petty states and principalities. Of this opinion I confess myself to have been; when, disregarding the wild chronology of the *Muselmans* and *Gabrs*, I had allowed the utmost natural duration to the reigns of eleven *Pisbdádi* kings, without being able to add more than a hundred years to NEWTON's computation. It seemed, indeed, unaccountably strange, that, although ABRAHAM had found a regular monarchy in *Egypt*, although the kingdom of *Yemen* had just pretensions to very high antiquity, although the *Chinese*, in the twelfth century before our era, had made approaches at least to the present form of their extensive dominion, and although we

can hardly suppose the first *Indian* monarchs to have reigned less than three thousand years ago, yet *Persia*, the most delightful, the most compact, the most desirable country of them all, should have remained for so many ages unsettled and divided. A fortunate discovery, for which I was first indebted to *Mir MUHAMMED HUSAIN*, one of the most intelligent *Muselmans* in *India*, has at once dissipated the cloud, and cast a gleam of light on the primeval history of *Iran* and of the human race, of which I had long despaired, and which could hardly have dawned from any other quarter.

The rare and interesting tract on twelve different religions, entitled the *Dabistân*, and composed by a *Mohammedan* traveller, a native of *Cashmir*, named *MOHSAN*, but distinguished by the assumed surname of *FA'NI*, or *Perishable*; begins with a wonderfully curious chapter on the religion of *HU'SHANG*, which was long anterior to that of *ZERA'TUSHT*, but had continued to be secretly professed by many learned *Persians* even to the author's time; and several of the most eminent of them, dissenting in many points from the *Gabrs*, and persecuted by the ruling powers of their country, had retired to *India*; where they compiled a number of books, now extremely scarce, which *MOHSAN* had perused, and with the writers of which, or with many of

them, he had contracted an intimate friendship: from them he learned, that a powerful monarchy had been established for ages in *Iràn* before the accession of CAYUMERS, that it was called the *Mabábadian* dynasty, for a reason which will soon be mentioned, and that many princes, of whom seven or eight only are named in the *Dabistán*, and among them MAHBUL, or MAHA' BELI, had raised their empire to the zenith of human glory. If we can rely on this evidence, which to me appears unexceptionable, the *Iranian* monarchy must have been the oldest in the world; but it will remain dubious, to which of the three stocks, *Hindu*, *Arabian*, or *Tartar*, the first Kings of *Iràn* belonged, or whether they sprang from a *fourth* race distinct from any of the others; and these are questions, which we shall be able, I imagine, to answer precisely, when we have carefully inquired into the *languages* and *letters*, *religion* and *philosophy*, and incidentally into the *arts* and *sciences*, of the ancient *Persians*.

I. In the new and important remarks, which I am going to offer, on the ancient *languages* and *characters* of *Iràn*, I am sensible, that you must give me credit for many assertions, which on this occasion it is impossible to prove; for I should ill deserve your indulgent attention, if I were to abuse it by repeating a dry list of detached words,

and presenting you with a vocabulary instead of a dissertation; but, since I have no system to maintain, and have not suffered imagination to delude my judgement; since I have habituated myself to form opinions of men and things from *evidence*, which is the only solid basis of *civil*, as *experiment* is of *natural*, knowledge; and since I have maturely considered the questions which I mean to discuss; you will not, I am persuaded, suspect my testimony, or think that I go too far, when I assure you, that I will assert nothing positively, which I am not able satisfactorily to demonstrate. When MUHAMMED was born, and ANU'SHIRAVAN, whom he calls *the Just King*, sat on the throne of *Persia*, two languages appear to have been generally prevalent in the great empire of *Iran*; that of the *Court*, thence named *Deri*, which was only a refined and elegant dialect of the *Parsi*, so called from the province, of which *Sbirax* is now the capital, and that of the learned, in which most books were composed, and which had the name of *Pablavi*, either from the *heroes*, who spoke it in former times, or from *Pablu*, a tract of land, which included, we are told, some considerable cities of *Irak*: the ruder dialects of both were, and, I believe, still are, spoken by the rusticks in several provinces; and in many of them, as *Herat*, *Zabul*, *Sistan* and others, distinct idioms

were vernacular, as it happens in every kingdom of great extent. Besides the *Pàrsi* and *Pablavi*, a very ancient and abstruse tongue was known to the priests and philosophers, called *the language of the Zend*, because a book on religious and moral duties, which they held sacred, and which bore that name, had been written in it; while the *Pàzend*, or comment on that work, was composed in *Pablavi*, as a more popular idiom; but a learned follower of ZERA'TUSHT, named BAHMAN, who lately died at *Calcutta*, where he had lived with me as a *Persian* reader about three years, assured me, that the letters of his prophet's book were properly called *Zend*, and the language, *Avestà*, as the words of the *Vèda's* are *Sanscrit*, and the characters, *Nàgari*; or as the old *Saga's* and poems of *Iseland* were expressed in *Runick* letters: let us however, in compliance with custom, give the name of *Zend* to the sacred language of *Persia*, until we can find, as we shall very soon, a fitter appellation for it. The *Zend* and the old *Pablavi* are almost extinct in *Iràn*; for among six or seven thousand *Gabrs*, who reside chiefly at *Yezd*, and in *Cirmàn*, there are very few, who can read *Pablavi*, and scarce any, who even boast of knowing the *Zend*; while the *Pàrsi*, which remains almost pure in the *Sbábnámab*, has now become by the intermixture of numberless *Arabick* words,

and many imperceptible changes, a new language exquisitely polished by a series of fine writers in prose and verse, and analogous to the different idioms gradually formed in *Europe* after the subversion of the Roman empire : but with modern *Persian* we have no concern in our present inquiry, which I confine to the ages, that preceded the *Mohammedan* conquest. Having twice read the works of FIRDAUSI' with great attention, since I applied myself to the study of old *Indian* literature, I can assure you with confidence, that hundreds of *Parsi* nouns are pure *Sanscrit*, with no other change than such as may be observed in the numerous *bbáshà's*, or vernacular dialects, of *India* ; that very many *Persian* imperatives are the roots of *Sanscrit* verbs ; and that even the moods and tenses of the *Persian* verb substantive, which is the model of all the rest, are deducible from the *Sanscrit* by an easy and clear analogy : we may hence conclude, that the *Parsi* was derived, like the various *Indian* dialects, from the language of the *Bráhmans* ; and I must add, that in the pure *Persian* I find no trace of any *Arabian* tongue, except what proceeded from the known intercourse between the *Persians* and *Arabs*, especially in the time of BAH-RA'M, who was educated in *Arabia*, and whose *Arabick* verses are still extant, together with his heroick line in *Deri*, which many suppose to be

the first attempt at *Persian* versification in *Arabian* metre: but, without having recourse to other arguments, *the composition of words*, in which the genius of the *Persian* delights, and which that of the *Arabick* abhors, is a decisive proof, that the *Parsi* sprang from an *Indian*, and not from an *Arabian*, stock. Considering languages as mere instruments of knowledge, and having strong reasons to doubt the existence of genuine books in *Zend* or *Pablavi* (especially since the well-informed author of the *Dabistàn* affirms the work of ZERA'TUSHT to have been lost, and its place supplied by a recent compilation) I had no inducement, though I had an opportunity, to learn what remains of those ancient languages; but I often conversed on them with my friend BAHMAN, and both of us were convinced after full consideration, that the *Zend* bore a strong resemblance to *Sanscrit*, and the *Pablavi* to *Arabick*. He had at my request translated into *Pablavi* the fine inscription, exhibited in the *Gulistàn*, on the diadem of CYRUS; and I had the patience to read the list of words from the *Pázend* in the appendix to the *Farbangi Jebángiri*: this examination gave me perfect conviction, that the *Pablavi* was a dialect of the *Chaldaick*; and of this curious fact I will exhibit a short proof. By the nature of the *Chaldean* tongue most words ended in the first



long vowel like *sbemià*, heaven; and that very word, unaltered in a single letter, we find in the *Pàzend*, together with *lailià*, night, *meyà*, water, *nirà*, fire, *matrà*, rain, and a multitude of others, all *Arabick* or *Hebrew* with a *Chaldean* termination: so *zamar*, by a beautiful metaphor from *pruning trees*, means in *Hebrew* to *compose verses*, and thence, by an easy transition, to *sing* them; and in *Pablavi* we see the verb *zamrùiten*, to *sing*, with its forms *zamrùnemi*, I *sing*, and *zamrùníd*, he *sang*; the verbal terminations of the *Persian* being added to the *Chaldaick* root. Now all those words are integral parts of the language, not adventitious to it like the *Arabick* nouns and verbals engrafted on modern *Persian*; and this distinction convinces me, that the dialect of the *Gabrs*, which they pretend to be that of *ZERA'TUSHT*, and of which *BAHMAN* gave me a variety of written specimens, is a late invention of their priests, or subsequent at least to the *Muselman* invasion; for, although it may be possible, that a few of their sacred books were preserved, as he used to assert, in sheets of lead or copper at the bottom of wells near *Yezd*, yet as the conquerors had not only a spiritual, but a political, interest in persecuting a warlike, robust, and indignant race of irreconcilable conquered subjects, a long time must have elapsed, before the hidden scriptures could have been safely

brought to light, and few, who could perfectly understand them, must then have remained ; but, as they continued to profess among themselves the religion of their forefathers, it became expedient for the *Mùbeds* to supply the lost or mutilated works of their legislator by new compositions, partly from their imperfect recollection, and partly from such moral and religious knowledge, as they gleaned, most probably, among the *Christians*, with whom they had an intercourse. One rule we may fairly establish in deciding the question, whether the books of the modern *Gabrs* were anterior to the invasion of the *Arabs*: when an *Arabick* noun occurs in them changed only by the spirit of the *Chaldean* idiom, as *wertà*, for *werd*, a rose, *dabà*, for *dbabab*, gold, or *demàn*, for *zemàn*, time, we may allow it to have been ancient *Pablavi*; but, when we meet with verbal nouns or infinitives, evidently formed by the rules of *Arabian* grammar, we may be sure, that the phrases, in which they occur, are comparatively modern; and not a single passage, which *BAHMAN* produced from the books of his religion, would abide this test.

We come now to the language of the *Zend*; and here I must impart a discovery, which I lately made, and from which we may draw the most interesting consequences. *M. ANQUETIL*,

who had the merit of undertaking a voyage to *India*, in his earliest youth, with no other view than to recover the writings of ZERA'TUSHT, and who would have acquired a brilliant reputation in *France*, if he had not sullied it by his immoderate vanity and virulence of temper, which alienated the good will even of his own countrymen, has exhibited in his work, entitled *Zendâvestâ*, two vocabularies in *Zend* and *Pablavi*, which he had found in an approved collection of *Rawâyat*, or *Traditional Pieces*, in modern *Persian*: of his *Pablavi* no more needs be said, than that it strongly confirms my opinion concerning the *Cbaldaick* origin of that language; but, when I perused the *Zend* glossary, I was inexpressibly surprized to find, that six or seven words in ten were pure *Sanscrit*, and even some of their inflexions formed by the rules of the *Vyâcaran*; as *yushmâcam*, the genitive plural of *yushmad*. Now M. ANQUETIL most certainly, and the *Persian* compiler most probably, had no knowledge of *Sanscrit*; and could not, therefore, have invented a list of *Sanscrit* words: it is, therefore, an authentick list of *Zend* words, which had been preserved in books or by tradition; and it follows, that the language of the *Zend* was at least a dialect of the *Sanscrit*, approaching perhaps as nearly to it as the *Prâcrit*, or other popular idioms, which

we know to have been spoken in *India* two thousand years ago. From all these facts it is a necessary consequence, that the oldest discoverable languages of *Persia* were *Cbaldaick* and *Sanfcrit*; and that, when they had ceased to be vernacular, the *Pablavi* and *Zend* were deduced from them respectively, and the *Pársi* either from the *Zend*, or immediately from the dialect of the *Brábmans*; but all had perhaps a mixture of *Tartarian*; for the best lexicographers assert, that numberless words in ancient *Persian* are taken from the language of the *Cimmerians*, or the *Tartars* of *Kipcbák*; so that the three families, whose lineage we have examined in former discourses, had left visible traces of themselves in *Iràn*, long before the *Tartars* and *Arabs* had rushed from their deserts, and returned to that very country, from which in all probability they originally proceeded, and which the *Hindus* had abandoned in an earlier age, with positive commands from their legislators to revisit it no more. I close this head with observing, that no supposition of a mere political or commercial intercourse between the different nations will account for the *Sanfcrit* and *Cbaldaick* words, which we find in the old *Persian* tongues; because they are, in the first place, too numerous to have been introduced by such means, and, secondly, are not the names of exotick animals,

commodities, or arts, but those of material elements, parts of the body, natural objects and relations, affections of the mind, and other ideas common to the whole race of man.

If a nation of *Hindus*, it may be urged, ever possessed and governed the country of *Iràn*, we should find on the very ancient ruins of the temple or palace, now called *the throne of JEMSHID*, some inscriptions in *Dévandgari*, or at least in the characters on the stones at *Elephanta*, where the sculpture is unquestionably *Indian*, or in those on the *Staff of FIRUZ SHAH*, which exist in the heart of *India*; and such inscriptions we probably should have found, if that edifice had not been erected after the migration of the *Bráhmans* from *Iràn*, and the violent schism in the *Persian* religion, of which we shall presently speak; for, although the popular name of the building at *Istakbr*, or *Persopolis*, be no certain proof that it was raised in the time of *JEMSHID*, yet such a fact might easily have been preserved by tradition, and we shall soon have abundant evidence, that the temple was posteriour to the reign of the *Hindu* monarchs: the *cypresses* indeed, which are represented with the figures in procession, might induce a reader of the *Sháh-námah* to believe, that the sculptures related to the new faith introduced by *ZERA'TUSHT*; but, as a cypress is a beautiful ornament, and as

many of the figures appear inconsistent with the reformed adoration of fire, we must have recourse to stronger proofs, that the *Takbt* JEMSHID was erected after CAYU'MERS. The building has lately been visited, and the characters on it examined, by Mr. FRANCKLIN; from whom we learn, that NIEBUHR has delineated them with great accuracy: but without such testimony I should have suspected the correctness of the delineation; because the *Danish* traveller has exhibited two inscriptions in modern *Persian*, and one of them from the same place, which cannot have been exactly transcribed: they are very elegant verses of NIZAMI' and SADI' on the instability of human greatness, but so ill engraved or so ill copied, that, if I had not had them nearly by heart, I should not have been able to read them; and M. ROUSSEAU of *Isfabàn*, who translated them with shameful inaccuracy, must have been deceived by the badness of the copy; or he never would have created a new king WAKAM, by forming one word of JEM and the particle prefixed to it. Assuming, however, that we may reason as conclusively on the characters published by NIEBUHR, as we might on the monuments themselves, were they now before us, we may begin with observing, as CHARDIN had observed on the very spot, that they bear no resemblance

whatever to the letters used by the *Gabrs* in their copies of the *Vendidàd*: this I once urged, in an amicable debate with BAHMAN, as a proof, that the *Zend* letters were a modern invention; but he seemed to hear me without surprize, and insisted, that the letters, to which I alluded, and which he had often seen, were monumental characters never used in books, and intended either to conceal some religious mysteries from the vulgar, or to display the art of the sculptor, like the embellished *Cífick* and *Nágari* on several *Arabian* and *India* monuments. He wondered, that any man could seriously doubt the antiquity of the *Pablavi* letters; and in truth the inscription behind the horse of *Rustam*, which NIEBUHR has also given us, is apparently *Pablavi*, and might with some pains be decyphered: that character was extremely rude, and seems to have been written, like the *Roman* and the *Arabick*, in a variety of hands; for I remember to have examined a rare collection of old *Persian* coins in the Museum of the great Anatomist, WILLIAM HUNTER, and, though I believed the legends to be *Pablavi*, and had no doubt, that they were coins of *Parthian* kings, yet I could not read the inscriptions without wasting more time, than I had then at command, in comparing the letters and ascertaining the proportions, in which they severally occurred.

The gross *Pablavi* was improved by ZERA'TUSHT or his disciples into an elegant and perspicuous character, in which the *Zendávestá* was copied; and both were written from the right hand to the left like other *Chaldaick* alphabets; for they are manifestly both of *Chaldean* origin; but the *Zend* has the singular advantage of expressing all the long and short vowels, by distinct marks, in the body of each word, and all the words are distinguished by full points between them; so that, if modern *Persian* were unmixed with *Arabick*, it might be written in *Zend* with the greatest convenience, as any one may perceive by copying in that character a few pages of the *Sbábnámab*. As to the unknown inscriptions in the palace of JEMSHÍ'D, it may reasonably be doubted, whether they contain a system of letters, which any nation ever adopted: in *five* of them the letters, which are separated by points, may be reduced to forty, at least I can distinguish no more essentially different; and they all seem to be regular variations and compositions of a straight line and an angular figure like the head of a javelin, or a leaf (to use the language of botanists) *hearted and lanced*. Many of the *Runick* letters appear to have been formed of similar elements; and it has been observed, that the writing at *Persepolis* bears a strong resemblance to that, which the *Irisb* call *Ogham*:



the word *Agam* in *Sanſcrit* means *mysterious knowledge*; but I dare not affirm, that the two words had a common origin, and only mean to ſuggeſt, that, if the characters in queſtion be really alphabetical, they were probably ſecret and ſacerdotal, or a mere cypher, perhaps, of which the prieſts only had the key. They might, I imagine, be decyphered, if the language were certainly known; but, in all the other inſcriptions of the ſame fort, the characters are too complex, and the variations of them too numerous, to admit an opinion, that they could be ſymbols of articulate ſounds; for even the *Ná-gari* ſyſtem, which has more diſtinct letters than any known alphabet, conſiſts only of forty-nine ſimple characters, two of which are mere ſubſtitutions, and four of little uſe in *Sanſcrit* or in any other language; while the more complicated figures, exhibited by NIEBUHR, muſt be as numerous at leaſt as the *Chinese* keys, which are the ſigns of *ideas* only, and ſome of which reſemble the old *Persian* letters at *Iſtakbr*: the *Daniſh* traveller was convinced from his own obſervation, that they were written from the left hand, like all the characters uſed by *Hindu* nations; but I muſt leave this dark ſubject, which I cannot illuminate, with a remark formerly made by myſelf, that the ſquare *Chaldaick* letters, a few of which are found on the *Persian*

ruins, appear to have been originally the same with the *Dévanâgari*, before the latter were enclosed, as we now see them, in angular frames.

II. The primeval religion of *Irân*, if we rely on the authorities adduced by MOHSANI FA'NI, was that, which NEWTON calls the oldest (and it may justly be called the noblest) of all religions; "a firm belief, that One Supreme God  
 "made the world by his power, and continually  
 "governed it by his providence; a pious fear,  
 "love, and adoration of Him; a due reverence  
 "for parents and aged persons; a fraternal affection for the whole human species, and a compassionate tenderness even for the brute creation." A system of devotion so pure and sublime could hardly among mortals be of long duration; and we learn from the *Dabistân*, that the popular worship of the *Iránians* under HUSHANG was purely *Sabian*; a word, of which I cannot offer any certain etymology, but which has been deduced by grammarians from *Sabâ*, a *host*, and, particularly the *host of heaven*, or the *celestial bodies*, in the adoration of which the *Sabian* ritual is believed to have consisted: there is a description, in the learned work just mentioned, of the several *Persian* temples dedicated to the Sun and Planets, of the images adored in them, and of the magnificent processions to them on prescribed festivals, one of which is probably

represented by sculpture in the ruined city of JEMSHI'D; but the planetary worship in *Persia* seems only a part of a far more complicated religion, which we now find in these *Indian* provinces; for MOHSAN assures us, that, in the opinion of the best informed *Persians*, who professed the faith of HU'SHANG, distinguished from that of ZERA'TUSHT, the first monarch of *Iran* and of the whole earth was MAHA'BA'D, a word apparently *Sanscrit*, who divided the people into four orders, the *religious*, the *military*, the *commercial*, and the *servile*, to which he assigned names unquestionably the same in their origin with those now applied to the four primary classes of the *Hindus*. They added, that He received from the creator, and promulgated among men, *a sacred book in a heavenly language*, to which the *Muselman* author gives the *Arabick* title of *desâtir*, or regulations, but the original name of which he has not mentioned; and that *fourteen* MAHA'BA'DS had appeared or would appear in human shapes for the government of this world: now when we know, that the *Hindus* believe in *fourteen* MENU'S, or celestial personages with similar functions, the *first* of whom left a book of *regulations*, or *divine ordinances*, which they hold equal to the *Véda*, and the language of which they believe to be that of the Gods, we can hardly doubt, that the first corruption of the

purest and oldest religion was the system of *Indian* Theology, invented by the *Bráhmans* and prevalent in these territories, where the book of MAHA'BA'D or MENU is at this hour the standard of all religious and moral duties. The accession of CAYUMERS to the throne of *Persia*, in the eighth or ninth century before CHRIST, seems to have been accompanied by a considerable revolution both in government and religion: he was most probably of a different race from the *Mabábadians*, who preceded him, and began perhaps the new system of national faith, which HU'SHANG, whose name it bears, completed; but the reformation was partial; for, while they rejected the complex polytheism of their predecessors, they retained the laws of MAHA'BA'D, with a superstitious veneration for the sun, the planets, and fire; thus resembling the *Hindu* sects, called *Saura's* and *Ságnica's*, the second of which is very numerous at *Banares*, where many *agnibótra's* are continually blazing, and where the *Ságnica's*, when they enter on their sacerdotal office, kindle, with two pieces of the hard wood *Semi*, a fire which they keep lighted through their lives for their nuptial ceremony, the performance of solemn sacrifices, the obsequies of departed ancestors, and their own funeral pile. This remarkable rite was continued by ZERA'TUSHT; who reformed the old religion by

the addition of genii, or angels, presiding over months and days, of new ceremonies in the veneration shown to fire, of a new work, which he pretended to have received from heaven, and, above all, by establishing the actual adoration of One Supreme Being : he was born, according to MOHSAN, in the district of *Rai* ; and it was He, not, as AMMIANUS asserts, his protector GUSH-TASB, who travelled into *India*, that he might receive information from the *Bráhmans* in theology and ethicks. It is barely possible, that PYTHAGORAS knew him in the capital of *Irak* ; but the *Grecian* sage must then have been far advanced in years, and we have no certain evidence of an intercourse between the two philosophers. The reformed religion of *Persia* continued in force, till that country was subdued by the *Muselmans* ; and, without studying the *Zend*, we have ample information concerning it in the modern *Persian* writings of several, who professed it. BAHMAN always named ZERA-TUSHT, with reverence ; but he was in truth a pure Theist, and strongly disclaimed any adoration of the *fire* or other elements : he denied, that the doctrine of two coeval principles, supremely good and supremely bad, formed any part of his faith ; and he often repeated with emphasis the verses of FIRDAUSI on the prostration of CYRUS and his paternal grandfather

before the blazing altar: "Think not, that they  
 "were adorers of fire; for that element was  
 "only an exalted object, on the lustre of which  
 "they fixed their eyes; they humbled them-  
 "selves a whole week before GOD; and, if thy  
 "understanding be ever so little exerted, thou  
 "must acknowledge thy dependence on the  
 "being supremely pure." In a story of SADI,  
 near the close of his beautiful *Bûstân*, concern-  
 ing the idol of SO'MANA'T'H, or MAHA'DE'VA,  
 he confounds the religion of the *Hindus* with  
 that of the *Gabrs*, calling the *Brábmans* not only  
*Moghs*, (which might be justified by a passage in  
 the *Mesnavi*) but even readers of the *Zend* and  
*Pázend*: now, whether this confusion proceeded  
 from real or pretended ignorance, I cannot de-  
 cide, but am as firmly convinced, that the doc-  
 trines of the *Zend* were distinct from those of  
 the *Véda*, as I am that the religion of the *Bráb-*  
*mans*, with whom we converse every day, pre-  
 vailed in *Persia* before the accession of CAYU-  
 MERS, whom the *Pársi's*, from respect to his  
 memory, consider as the first of men, although  
 they believe in *an universal deluge* before his  
 reign.

With the religion of the old *Persians* their  
*philosophy* (or as much as we know of it) was  
 intimately connected; for they were assiduous  
 observers of the luminaries, which they adored,

and established, according to MOHSAN, who confirms in some degree the fragments of BEROSES, a number of artificial cycles with distinct names, which seem to indicate a knowledge of the period, in which the equinoxes appear to revolve: they are said also to have known the most wonderful powers of nature, and thence to have acquired the fame of magicians and enchanters; but I will only detain you with a few remarks on that metaphysical theology, which has been professed immemorially by a numerous sect of *Persians* and *Hindus*, was carried in part into *Greece*, and prevails even now among the learned *Muselmans*, who sometimes avow it without reserve. \ The modern philosophers of this persuasion are called *Súfi's*, either from the *Greek* word for a *sage*, or from the *woollen* mantle, which they used to wear in some provinces of *Persia*: their fundamental tenets are, that nothing exists absolutely but GOD: that the human soul is an emanation from his essence, and, though divided for a time from its heavenly source, will be finally re-united with it; that the highest possible happiness will arise from its reunion, and that the chief good of mankind, in this transitory world, consists in as perfect an *union* with the Eternal Spirit as the incumbrances of a mortal frame will allow; that, for this purpose, they should break all *connexion* (or *taálluk*,

as they call it), with extrinſick objects, and paſs through life without *attachments*, as a ſwimmer in the ocean ſtrikes freely without the impediment of clothes ; that they ſhould be ſtraight and free as the cypreſs, whoſe fruit is hardly perceptible, and not ſink under a load, like fruit-trees *attached* to a trellis ; that, if mere earthly charms have power to influence the ſoul, the *idea* of celeftial beauty muſt overwhelm it in extatick delight ; that, for want of apt words to expreſs the divine perfections and the ardour of devotion, we muſt borrow ſuch expreſſions as approach the neareſt to our ideas, and ſpeak of *Beauty* and *Love* in a tranſcendent and myſtical ſenſe ; that, like a *reed* torn from its native bank, like *wax* ſeparated from its delicious honey, the ſoul of man bewails its diſunion with *melancholy muſick*, and ſheds burning tears, like the lighted taper, waiting paſſionately for the moment of its extinction, as a diſengagement from earthly trammels, and the means of returning to its Only Beloved. † Such in part (for I omit the minuter and more ſubtil metaphyſicks of the *Sūfi's*, which are mentioned in the *Dabiſtàn*) is the wild and enthuſiaſtick religion of the modern *Persian* poets, eſpecially of the ſweet HA'FIZ † and the great *Maulavi*: ſuch is the ſyſtem of the *Védānti* philoſophers and beſt lyrick poets of *India* ; and, as it was a ſyſtem of the higheſt an-



tiquity in both nations, it may be added to the many other proofs of an immemorial affinity between them.

III. On the ancient *monuments* of *Persian* sculpture and architecture we have already made such observations, as were sufficient for our purpose; nor will you be surprized at the diversity between the figures at *Elephanta*, which are manifestly *Hindu*, and those at *Persepolis*, which are merely *Sabian*, if you concur with me in believing, that the *Takhti Jemshid* was erected after the time of CAYU'MERS, when the *Bráhmans* had migrated from *Irán*, and when their intricate mythology had been superseded by the simpler adoration of the planets and of fire.

IV. As to the *sciences* or *arts* of the old *Persians*, I have little to say; and no complete evidence of them seems to exist. MOHSAN speaks more than once of ancient verses in the *Pablavi* language; and BAHMAN assured me, that some scanty remains of them had been preserved: their musick and painting, which NIZA'MI celebrated, have irrecoverably perished; and in regard to MA'NI', the painter and impostor, whose book of drawings called *Artang*, which he pretended to be divine, is supposed to have been destroyed by the *Chinese*, in whose dominions he had sought refuge, the whole tale is too modern to throw any light on the questions before

us concerning the origin of nations and the inhabitants of the primitive world.

Thus has it been proved by clear evidence and plain reasoning, that a powerful monarchy was established in *Iran* long before the *Assyrian*, or *Pisbdádi*, government; that it was in truth a *Hindu* monarchy, though, if any chuse to call it *Cusian*, *Casdean*, or *Scythian*, we shall not enter into a debate on mere names; that it subsisted many centuries, and that its history has been ingrafted on that of the *Hindus*, who founded the monarchies of *Ayódbyà* and *Indraprestha*; that the language of the first *Persian* empire was the mother of the *Sanscrit*, and consequently of the *Zend*, and *Parfi*, as well as of *Greek*, *Latin*, and *Gotbick*; that the language of the *Assyrians* was the parent of *Chaldaick* and *Pablavi*, and that the primary *Tartarian* language also had been current in the same empire; although, as the *Tartars* had no books or even letters, we cannot with certainty trace their unpolished and variable idioms. We discover, therefore, in *Persia*, at the earliest dawn of history, the *three* distinct races of men, whom we described on former occasions as possessors of *India*, *Arabia*, *Tartary*; and, whether they were collected in *Iran* from distant regions, or diverged from it, as from a common centre, we shall easily determine by the following considerations. Let us observe in the

first place the central position of *Iràn*, which is bounded by *Arabia*, by *Tartary*, and by *India*; whilst *Arabia* lies contiguous to *Iràn* only, but is remote from *Tartary*, and divided even from the skirts of *India* by a considerable gulf; no country, therefore, but *Persia* seems likely to have sent forth its colonies to all the kingdoms of *Asia*: the *Bráhmans* could never have migrated from *India* to *Iràn*, because they are expressly forbidden by their oldest existing laws to leave the region, which they inhabit at this day; the *Arabs* have not even a tradition of an emigration into *Persia* before MOHAMMED, nor had they indeed any inducement to quit their beautiful and extensive domains; and, as to the *Tartars*, we have no trace in history of their departure from their plains and forests, till the invasion of the *Medes*, who, according to etymologists, were the sons of MADAI, and even they were conducted by princes of an *Assyrian* family. The *three* races, therefore, whom we have already mentioned, (and more than three we have not yet found) migrated from *Iràn*, as from their common country; and thus the *Saxon* chronicle, I presume from good authority, brings the first inhabitants of *Britain* from *Armenia*; while a late very learned writer concludes, after all his laborious researches, that the *Goths* or *Scythians* came from *Persia*; and another contends with

great force, that both the *Irisb* and old *Britons* proceeded severally from the borders of the *Caspian*; a coincidence of conclusions from different media by persons wholly unconnected, which could scarce have happened, if they were not grounded on solid principles. We may therefore hold this proposition firmly established, that *Iràn*, or *Persia* in its largest sense, was the true centre of population, of knowledge, of languages, and of arts; which, instead of travelling westward only, as it has been fancifully supposed, or eastward, as might with equal reason have been asserted, were expanded in all directions to all the regions of the world, in which the *Hindu* race had settled under various denominations: but, whether *Asia* has not produced other races of men, distinct from the *Hindus*, the *Arabs*, or the *Tartars*, or whether any apparent diversity may not have sprung from an intermixture of those three in different proportions, must be the subject of a future inquiry. There is another question of more immediate importance, which you, gentlemen, only can decide: namely, “by what means we can preserve our Society from dying gradually away, as it has advanced gradually to its present (shall I say flourishing or languishing?) state.” It has subsisted five years without any expense to the members of it, until the first volume of our *Transactions* was published;

and the price of that large volume, if we compare the different values of money in *Bengal* and in *England*, is not more than equal to the *annual* contribution towards the charges of the Royal Society by each of its fellows, who may not have chosen to compound for it on his admission: this I mention, not from an idea that any of us could object to the purchase of one copy at least, but from a wish to inculcate the necessity of our common exertions in promoting the sale of the work both here and in *London*. In vain shall we meet, as a literary body, if our meetings shall cease to be supplied with original dissertations and memorials; and in vain shall we collect the most interesting papers, if we cannot publish them occasionally without exposing the Superintendents of the Company's press, who undertake to print them at their own hazard, to the danger of a considerable loss: by united efforts the *French* have compiled their stupendous repositories of universal knowledge; and by united efforts only can we hope to rival them, or to diffuse over our own country and the rest of *Europe* the lights attainable by our *Asiatick Researches*.

THE SEVENTH  
ANNIVERSARY DISCOURSE,

DELIVERED 25 FEBRUARY, 1790.

BY

THE PRESIDENT.

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GENTLEMEN,

ALTHOUGH we are at this moment considerably nearer to the frontier of *Cbina* than to the farthest limit of the *British* dominions in *Hindustán*, yet the first step, that we shall take in the philosophical journey, which I propose for your entertainment at the present meeting, will carry us to the utmost verge of the habitable globe known to the best geographers of old *Greece* and *Egypt*; beyond the boundary of whose knowledge we shall discern from the heights of the northern mountains an empire nearly equal in surface to a square of fifteen degrees; an empire, of which I do not mean to assign the precise limits, but which we may consider, for the purpose of this dissertation, as embraced on two sides by *Tartary* and *India*, while

the ocean separates its other sides from various *Asiatick* isles of great importance in the commercial system of *Europe*: annexed to that immense tract of land is the peninsula of *Corea*, which a vast oval basin divides from *Nifon* or *Japan*, a celebrated and imperial island, bearing in arts and in arms, in advantage of situation but not in felicity of government, a pre-eminence among eastern kingdoms analogous to that of *Britain* among the nations of the west. So many climates are included in so prodigious an area, that, while the principal emporium of *China* lies nearly under the tropick, its metropolis enjoys the temperature of *Samarkand*; such too is the diversity of soil in its fifteen provinces, that, while some of them are exquisitely fertile, richly cultivated, and extremely populous, others are barren and rocky, dry and unfruitful, with plains as wild or mountains as rugged as any in *Scythia*, and those either wholly deserted, or peopled by savage hordes, who, if they be not still independent, have been very lately subdued by the perfidy, rather than the valour, of a monarch, who has perpetuated his own breach of faith in a *Chinese* poem, of which I have seen a translation.

The word *China*, concerning which I shall offer some new remarks, is well known to the people, whom we call the *Chinese*; but they

never apply it (I speak of the learned among them) to themselves or to their country: themselves, according to Father VISDELOU, they describe as the *people of HAN*, or of some other illustrious family, by the memory of whose actions they flatter their national pride; and their country they call *Cbüm-cuë*, or the *Central Kingdom*, representing it in their symbolical characters by a parallelogram exactly bisected: at other times they distinguish it by the words *Tien-bia*, or *What is under Heaven*, meaning *all that is valuable on Earth*. Since they never name themselves with moderation, they would have no right to complain, if they knew, that *European* authors have ever spoken of them in the extremes of applause or of censure: by some they have been extolled as the oldest and the wisest, as the most learned and most ingenious, of nations; whilst others have derided their pretensions to antiquity, condemned their government as abominable, and arraigned their manners as inhuman, without allowing them an element of science, or a single art, for which they have not been indebted to some more ancient and more civilized race of men. The truth perhaps lies, where we usually find it, between the extremes; but it is not my design to accuse or to defend the *Chinese*, to depress or to aggrandize them: I shall confine myself to the dis-



cussion of a question connected with my former discourses, and far less easy to be solved than any hitherto started. “ Whence came the singular “ people, who long had governed *China*, before “ they were conquered by the *Tartars*?” On this problem, the solution of which has no concern, indeed, with our political or commercial interests, but a very material connection, if I mistake not, with interests of a higher nature, four opinions have been advanced, and all rather peremptorily asserted, than supported by argument and evidence. By a few writers it has been urged, that the *Chinese* are an original race, who have dwelled for ages, if not from eternity, in the land, which they now possess ; by others, and chiefly by the missionaries, it is insisted, that they sprang from the same stock with the *Hebrews* and *Arabs* ; a third assertion is that of the *Arabs* themselves and of M. PAUW, who hold it indubitable, that they were originally *Tartars* descending in wild clans from the steeps of *Imaus* ; and a fourth, at least as dogmatically pronounced as any of the preceding, is that of the *Bráhmens*, who decide, without allowing any appeal from their decision, that the *Chinas* (for so they are named in *Sanscrit*) were *Hindus* of the *Csbatriya*, or military, class, who, abandoning the privileges of their tribe, rambled in different bodies to the north-east of *Bengal* ; and, forgetting by degrees

the rites and religion of their ancestors, established separate principalities, which were afterwards united in the plains and valleys, which are now possessed by them. If any one of the three last opinions be just, the first of them must necessarily be relinquished; but of those three, the first cannot possibly be sustained; because it rests on no firmer support than a foolish remark, whether true or false, that *Sem* in *Chinese* means *life* and *procreation*; and because a tea-plant is not more different from a palm, than a *Chinese* from an *Arab*: they are men, indeed, as the tea and the palm are vegetables; but human sagacity could not, I believe, discover any other trace of resemblance between them. One of the *Arabs*, indeed, an account of whose voyage to *India* and *China* has been translated by RENAUDOT, thought the *Chinese* not only handsomer (according to his ideas of beauty) than the *Hindus*, but even more like his own countrymen in features, habiliments, carriages, manners and ceremonies; and this may be true, without proving an actual resemblance between the *Chinese* and *Arabs*, except in dress and complexion. The next opinion is more connected with that of the *Bráhmens*, than M. PAUW, probably, imagined; for though he tells us expressly, that by *Scythians* he meant the *Turks* or *Tartars*; yet the dragon on the standard, and some other peculiarities, from

which he would infer a clear affinity between the old *Tartars* and the *Chinese*, belonged indubitably to those *Scythians*, who are known to have been *Goths*; and the *Goths* had manifestly a common lineage with the *Hindus*, if his own argument, in the preface to his *Researches*, on the similarity of language, be, as all men agree that it is, irrefragable. That the *Chinese* were anciently of a *Tartarian* stock, is a proposition, which I cannot otherwise disprove for the present, than by insisting on the total dissimilarity of the two races in manners and arts, particularly in the fine arts of imagination, which the *Tartars*, by their own account, never cultivated; but, if we show strong grounds for believing, that the first *Chinese* were actually of an *Indian* race, it will follow that M. PAUW and the *Arabs* are mistaken: it is to the discussion of this new and, in my opinion, very interesting point, that I shall confine the remainder of my discourse.

In the *Sanscrit* Institutes of Civil and Religious Duties, revealed, as the *Hindus* believe, by MENU, the son of BRAHMA, we find the following curious passage: “ Many families of the  
 “ military class, having gradually abandoned the  
 “ ordinances of the *Véda*, and the company of  
 “ *Bráhmens*, lived in a state of degradation; as  
 “ the people of *Pundraca* and *Odra*, those of  
 “ *Dravira* and *Camboja*, the *Xavanas* and *Sacas*,

“ the *Páradas* and *Pablavas*, the *Chinas* and “ some other nations.” A full comment on this text would here be superfluous ; but, since the testimony of the *Indian* author, who, though certainly not a divine personage, was as certainly a very ancient lawyer, moralist, and historian, is direct and positive, disinterested and unsuspected, it would, I think, decide the question before us, if we could be sure, that the word *China* signified a *Chinese*, as all the *Pandits*, whom I have separately consulted, assert with one voice : they assure me, that the *Chinas* of *MENU* settled in a fine country to the north-east of *Gaur*, and to the east of *Cámarúp* and *Népál* ; that they have long been, and still are, famed as ingenious artificers ; and that they had themselves seen old *Chinese* idols, which bore a manifest relation to the primitive religion of *India* before *BUDDHA*’s appearance in it. A well-informed *Pandit* showed me a *Sanscrit* book in *Cashmirian* letters, which, he said, was revealed by *Srva* himself, and entitled *Saṭṭisangama* : he read to me a whole chapter of it on the heterodox opinions of the *Chinas*, who were divided, says the author, into near two hundred clans. I then laid before him a map of *Asia* ; and, when I pointed to *Cashmir*, his own country, he instantly placed his finger on the north-western provinces of *China*, where the *Chinas*, he said,

first established themselves; but he added, that *Mabácbina*, which was also mentioned in his book, extended to the eastern and southern oceans. I believe, nevertheless, that the *Chinese* empire, as we now call it, was not formed when the laws of MENU were collected; and for this belief, so repugnant to the general opinion, I am bound to offer my reasons. If the outline of history and chronology for the last two thousand years be correctly traced, (and we must be hardy scepticks to doubt it) the poems of CALIDA'S were composed before the beginning of our era: now it is clear, from internal and external evidence, that the *Rámáyan* and *Mabácbárat* were considerably older than the productions of that poet; and it appears from the style and metre of the *Dberma Sástra* revealed by MENU, that it was reduced to writing long before the age of VA'LMIC or VYA'SA, the second of whom names it with applause: we shall not, therefore, be thought extravagant, if we place the compiler of those laws between a thousand and fifteen hundred years before CHRIST; especially as BUDDHA, whose age is pretty well ascertained, is not mentioned in them; but, in the twelfth century before our era, the *Chinese* empire was at least in its cradle. This fact it is necessary to prove; and my first witness is CONFUCIUS himself. I know to what keen satire I

shall expose myself by citing that philosopher, after the bitter sarcasms of M. PAUW against him and against the translators of his mutilated, but valuable, works : yet I quote without scruple the book entitled *Lün Yü*, of which I possess the original with a verbal translation, and which I know to be sufficiently authentick for my present purpose : in the second part of it CON-FU-TSU declares, that “ Although he, like other men, “ could relate, as mere lessons of morality, the “ histories of the first and second imperial houses, “ yet, *for want of evidence*, he could give no “ certain account of them.” Now, if the *Chinese* themselves do not even pretend, that any historical monuments existed, in the age of CONFUCIUS, preceding the rise of their third dynasty about eleven hundred years before the *Christian* epoch, we may justly conclude, that the reign of VU'VAM was in the infancy of their empire, which hardly grew to maturity till some ages after that prince ; and it has been asserted by very learned *Europeans*, that even of the third dynasty, which he has the fame of having raised, no unsuspected memorial can now be produced. It was not till the eighth century before the birth of our Saviour, that a small kingdom was erected in the province of *Sben-si*, the capital of which stood nearly in the *thirty-fifth* degree of northern latitude, and about *five* degrees to the west of

*Si-gan*: both the country and its metropolis were called *Cbin*; and the dominion of its princes was gradually extended to the east and west. A king of *Cbin*, who makes a figure in the *Sbáb-námab* among the allies of *AFRA'SIYÁ'B*, was, I presume, a sovereign of the country just mentioned; and the river of *Cbin*, which the poet frequently names as the limit of his eastern geography, seems to have been the *Yellow River*, which the *Chinese* introduce at the beginning of their fabulous annals: I should be tempted to expatiate on so curious a subject; but the present occasion allows nothing superfluous, and permits me only to add, that *Mangukbán* died, in the middle of the thirteenth century, before the city of *Cbin*, which was afterwards taken by *KUBLAI*, and that the poets of *Iran* perpetually allude to the districts around it which they celebrate, with *Cbegil* and *Kboten*, for a number of musk-animals roving on their hills. The territory of *Cbin*, so called by the old *Hindus*, by the *Persians*, and by the *Chinese* (while the *Greeks* and *Arabs* were obliged by their defective articulation to miscall it *Sin*) gave its name to a race of emperors, whose tyranny made their memory so unpopular, that the modern inhabitants of *China* hold the word in abhorrence, and speak of themselves as the people of a milder and more virtuous dynasty; but it is highly

probable that the whole nation descended from the *Cbinas* of MENU, and, mixing with the *Tartars*, by whom the plains of *Honan* and the more southern provinces were thinly inhabited, formed by degrees the race of men, whom we now see in possession of the noblest empire in *Asia*.

In support of an opinion, which I offer as the result of long and anxious inquiries, I should regularly proceed to examine the language and letters, religion and philosophy, of the present *Chinese*, and subjoin some remarks on their ancient monuments, on their sciences, and on their arts both liberal and mechanical: but their spoken *language*, not having been preserved by the usual symbols of articulate sounds, must have been for many ages in a continual flux; their *letters*, if we may so call them, are merely the symbols of ideas; their popular *religion* was imported from *India* in an age comparatively modern; and their *philosophy* seems yet in so rude a state, as hardly to deserve the appellation; they have no *ancient monuments*, from which their origin can be traced even by plausible conjecture; their *sciences* are wholly exotick; and their *mechanical arts* have nothing in them characteristick of a particular family; nothing, which any set of men, in a country so highly favoured by nature, might not have discovered and improved. They have in-



deed, both national musick and national poetry, and both of them beautifully pathetick; but of painting, sculpture, or architecture, as arts of imagination, they seem (like other *Asiaticks*) to have no idea. Instead, therefore, of enlarging separately on each of those heads, I shall briefly inquire, how far the literature and religious practices of *Cbina* confirm or oppose the proposition, which I have advanced.

The declared and fixed opinion of M. DE GUIGNES, on the subject before us, is nearly connected with that of the *Brâhmens*: he maintains, that the *Chinese* were emigrants from *Egypt*; and the *Egyptians*, or *Ethiopiens*, (for they were clearly the same people) had indubitably a common origin with the old natives of *India*, as the affinity of their languages, and of their institutions, both religious and political, fully evinces; but that *Cbina* was peopled a few centuries before our era by a colony from the banks of the *Nile*, though neither *Persians* nor *Arabs*, *Tartars* nor *Hindus*, ever heard of such an emigration, is a paradox, which the bare authority even of so learned a man cannot support; and, since reason grounded on facts can alone decide such a question, we have a right to demand clearer evidence and stronger arguments, than any that he has adduced. The hieroglyphicks of *Egypt* bear, indeed, a strong resem-

blance to the mythological sculptures and paintings of *India*, but seem wholly dissimilar to the symbolical system of the *Chinese*, which might easily have been invented (as they assert) by an individual, and might very naturally have been contrived by the first *Chinas*, or out-cast *Hindus*, who either never knew, or had forgotten, the alphabetical characters of their wiser ancestors. As to the table and busts of *ISIS*, they seem to be given up as modern forgeries; but, if they were indisputably genuine, they would be nothing to the purpose; for the letters on the bust appear to have been designed as alphabetical; and the fabricator of them (if they really were fabricated in *Europe*) was uncommonly happy, since two or three of them are exactly the same with those on a metal pillar yet standing in the north of *India*. In *Egypt*, if we can rely on the testimony of the *Greeks*, who studied no language but their own, there were two sets of alphabetical characters; the one *popular*, like the various letters used in our *Indian* provinces; and the other *sacerdotal*, like the *Dévanâgari*, especially that form of it, which we see in the *Vêda*; besides which they had two sorts of *sacred sculpture*; the one simple, like the figures of *BUDDHA* and the three *RA'MAS*; and the other, allegorical, like the images of *GANE'SA*, or *Divine Wisdom*, and *I'SA'NI'*, or *Nature*, with all

their emblematical accompaniments; but the *real character* of the *Chinese* appears wholly distinct from any *Egyptian* writing, either mysterious or popular; and, as to the fancy of M. DE GUIGNES, that the complicated symbols of *China* were at first no more than *Phenician* monograms, let us hope, that he has abandoned so wild a conceit, which he started probably with no other view than to display his ingenuity and learning.

We have ocular proof, that the few radical characters of the *Chinese* were originally (like our astronomical and chymical symbols) the pictures or outlines of visible objects, or figurative signs for simple ideas, which they have multiplied by the most ingenious combinations and the liveliest metaphors; but, as the system is peculiar, I believe, to themselves and the *Japanese*, it would be idly ostentatious to enlarge on it at present; and, for the reasons already intimated, it neither corroborates nor weakens the opinion, which I endeavour to support. The same may as truly be said of their *spoken* language; for, independently of its constant fluctuation during a series of ages, it has the peculiarity of excluding four or five sounds, which other nations articulate, and is clipped into monosyllables, even when the ideas expressed by them, and the written symbols for those ideas, are very complex. This has arisen,

I suppose, from the singular habits of the people ; for, though their common tongue be so *musically* accented as to form a kind of recitative, yet it wants those *grammatical* accents, without which all human tongues would appear monosyllabick: thus *Amita*, with an accent on the first syllable, means, in the *Sanscrit* language, *immeasurable* ; and the natives of *Bengal* pronounce it *Omito* ; but, when the religion of BUDDHA, the son of MA'YA', was carried hence into *China*, the people of that country, unable to pronounce the name of their new God, called him FOE, the son of MO-YE, and divided his epithet *Amita* into three syllables O-MI-TO, annexing to them certain ideas of their own, and expressing them in writing by three distinct symbols. We may judge from this instance, whether a comparison of their spoken tongue with the dialects of other nations can lead to any certain conclusion as to their origin ; yet the instance, which I have given, supplies me with an argument from analogy, which I produce as conjectural only, but which appears more and more plausible, the oftener I consider it. The BUDDHA of the *Hindus* is unquestionably the FOE of *China* ; but the great progenitor of the *Chinese* is also named by them FO-HI, where the second monosyllable signifies, it seems, a *victim* : now the ancestor of that military tribe, whom the *Hindus* call the

*Cbandravanfa*, or Children of the MOON, was, according to their *Puránas* or legends, BUDHA, or the genius of the planet *Mercury*, from whom, in the *fifth* degree, descended a prince named DRUHYA; whom his father YAYA'TI sent in exile to the east of *Hindustán*, with this imprecation, "may thy progeny be ignorant of the *Véda*." The name of the banished prince could not be pronounced by the modern *Chinese*; and, though I dare not conjecture, that the last syllable of it has been changed into YAO, I may nevertheless observe that YAO was the *fifth* in descent from FO-HI, or at least the fifth mortal in the first imperial dynasty; that all *Chinese* history before him is considered by *Chinese* themselves as poetical or fabulous; that his father TI-CO, like the *Indian* king YAYA'TI, was the first prince who married several women; and that FO-HI, the head of their race, appeared, say the *Chinese*, in a province of the west, and held his court in the territory of *Chín*, where the rovers, mentioned by the *Indian* legislator, are supposed to have settled. Another circumstance in the parallel is very remarkable: according to father DE PREMARE, in his tract on *Chinese* mythology, the mother of FO-HI was the *Daughter of Heaven*, surnamed *Flower-loving*, and, as the nymph was walking alone on the bank of a river with a similar name, she found herself on a

sudden encircled by a *rain-bow*; soon after which she became pregnant, and at the end of twelve years was delivered of a son radiant as herself, who, among other titles, had that of SU'I, or *Star of the Year*. Now in the mythological system of the *Hindus*, the nymph RO'HINI', who presides over the fourth lunar mansion, was the favourite mistress of SO'MA, or the Moon, among whose numerous epithets we find *Cumudanáyaca*, or *Delighting in a species of water-flower*, that blossoms at night; and their offspring was BUDHA, regent of a planet, and called also, from the names of his parents, RAUHINEYA or SAUMYA: it is true, that the learned missionary explains the word SU'I by *Jupiter*; but an exact resemblance between two such fables could not have been expected; and it is sufficient for my purpose, that they seem to have a family likeness. The God BUDHA, say the *Indians*, married ILA', whose father was preserved in a miraculous ark from an universal deluge: now, although I cannot insist with confidence, that the *rain-bow* in the *Chinese* fable alludes to the *Mosaick* narrative of the flood, nor build any solid argument on the divine personage NIU-YA, of whose character, and even of whose sex, the historians of *China* speak very doubtfully, I may, nevertheless, assure you, after full inquiry and consideration, that the *Chinese*, like the *Hindus*, believe this

earth to have been wholly covered with water, which, in works of undisputed authenticity, they describe as *flowing abundantly, then subsiding, and separating the higher from the lower age of mankind*; that the *division of time*, from which their poetical history begins, just preceded the appearance of FO-HI on the mountains of *Cbin*, but that the great *inundation* in the reign of YAO was either confined to the lowlands of his kingdom, if the whole account of it be not a fable, or, if it contain any allusion to the flood of NOAH, has been ignorantly misplaced by the *Chinese* annalists.

The importation of a new religion into *Cbina*, in the first century of our era, must lead us to suppose, that the former system, whatever it was, had been found inadequate to the purpose of restraining the great body of the people from those offences against conscience and virtue, which the civil power could not reach; and it is hardly possible that, without such restrictions, any government could long have subsisted with felicity; for no government can long subsist without equal justice, and justice cannot be administered without the sanctions of religion. Of the religious opinions, entertained by CONFUCIUS and his followers, we may glean a general notion from the fragments of their works translated by COUPLET: they professed a firm belief in the

supreme God; and gave a demonstration of his being and of his providence from the exquisite beauty and perfection of the celestial bodies, and the wonderful order of nature in the whole fabric of the visible world. From this belief they deduced a system of Ethics, which the philosopher sums up in a few words at the close of the *Lün-yü*: “He,” says CONFUCIUS, “who shall be fully persuaded, that the Lord of Heaven governs the universe, who shall in all things chuse moderation, who shall perfectly know his own species, and so act among them, that his life and manners may conform to his knowledge of God and man, may be truly said to discharge all the duties of a sage, and to be far exalted above the common herd of the human race.” But such a religion and such morality could never have been general; and we find, that the people of *China* had an ancient system of ceremonies and superstitions, which the government and the philosophers appear to have encouraged, and which has an apparent affinity with some parts of the oldest *Indian* worship: they believed in the agency of genii or tutelary spirits, presiding over the stars and the clouds, over lakes and rivers, mountains, valleys, and woods, over certain regions and towns, over all the elements (of which, like the *Hindus*, they reckoned *five*) and particularly



over *fire*, the most brilliant of them : to those deities they offered victims on high places ; and the following passage from the *Sbi-cin*, or *Book of Odes*, is very much in the style of the *Bráhmans* : “ Even they, who perform a sacrifice with  
 “ due reverence, cannot perfectly assure them-  
 “ selves, that the divine spirits accept their ob-  
 “ lations ; and far less can they, who adore the  
 “ Gods with languor and oscitancy, clearly per-  
 “ ceive their sacred illapses.” These are im-  
 perfect traces indeed, but they are traces, of an  
 affinity between the religion of MENU and that  
 of the *Cbinas*, whom he names among the apos-  
 tates from it: M. LE GENTIL observed, he says,  
 a strong resemblance between the funeral rites of  
 the *Chinese* and the *Sráddha* of the *Hindus* :  
 and M. BAILLY, after a learned investigation,  
 concludes, that “ Even the puerile and absurd  
 “ stories of the *Chinese* fabulists contain a rem-  
 “ nant of ancient *Indian* history, with a faint  
 “ sketch of the first *Hindu* ages.” As the *Bauddhas*,  
 indeed, were *Hindus*, it may naturally be  
 imagined, that they carried into *Cbina* many  
 ceremonies practised in their own country ;  
 but the *Bauddhas* positively forbid the immo-  
 lation of cattle ; yet we know, that various ani-  
 mals, even bulls and men, were anciently sa-  
 crificed by the *Chinese* ; besides which we dis-  
 cover many singular marks of relation between

them and the old *Hindus*: as in the remarkable period of *four hundred and thirty two thousand*, and the cycle of *sixty*, years; in the predilection for the mystical number *nine*; in many similar facts and great festivals, especially at the solstices and equinoxes; in the just-mentioned obsequies consisting of rice and fruits offered to the manes of their ancestors; in the dread of dying childless, lest such offerings should be intermitted; and, perhaps, in their common abhorrence of *red* objects, which the *Indians* carried so far, that MENU himself, where he allows a *Brábmén* to trade, if he cannot otherwise support life, absolutely forbids “his trafficking in any sort of “*red* cloths, whether linen or woollen, or made “of woven bark.” All the circumstances, which have been mentioned under the two heads of *literature* and *religion*, seem collectively to prove (as far as such a question admits proof) that the *Cbinese* and *Hindus* were originally the same people, but having been separated near four thousand years, have retained few strong features of their ancient consanguinity, especially as the *Hindus* have preserved their old language and ritual, while the *Cbinese* very soon lost both, and the *Hindus* have constantly intermarried among themselves, while the *Cbinese*, by a mixture of *Tartarian* blood from the time of their first establishment, have at length formed a race

distinct in appearance both from *Indians* and *Tartars*.

A similar diversity has arisen, I believe, from similar causes, between the people of *Cbina* and *Japan*; on the second of which nations we have now, or soon shall have, as correct and as ample instruction as can possibly be obtained without a perfect acquaintance with the *Cbinese* characters. KÆMPFER has taken from M. TITSINGH the honour of being the first, and he from KÆMPFER that of being the only, *European*, who, by a long residence in *Japan*, and a familiar intercourse with the principal natives of it, has been able to collect authentick materials for the natural and civil history of a country *secluded*, as the *Romans* used to say of our own island, *from the rest of the world*: the works of those illustrious travellers will confirm and embellish each other; and, when M. TITSINGH shall have acquired a knowledge of *Cbinese*, to which a part of his leisure in *Java* will be devoted, his precious collection of books in that language, on the laws and revolutions, the natural productions, the arts, manufactures and sciences of *Japan*, will be in his hands an inexhaustible mine of new and important information. Both he and his predecessor assert with confidence, and, I doubt not, with truth, that the *Japanese* would resent, as an insult on their dignity, the bare

suggestion of their descent from the *Chinese*, whom they surpass in several of the mechanical arts, and, what is of greater consequence, in military spirit; but they do not, I understand, mean to deny, that they are a branch of the same ancient stem with the people of *China*; and, were that fact ever so warmly contested by them, it might be proved by an invincible argument, if the preceding part of this discourse, on the origin of the *Chinese*, be thought to contain just reasoning. In the first place, it seems inconceivable, that the *Japanese*, who never appear to have been conquerors or conquered, should have adopted the whole system of *Chinese* literature with all its inconveniences and intricacies, if an immemorial connexion had not subsisted between the two nations, or, in other words, if the bold and ingenious race, who peopled *Japan* in the middle of the thirteenth century before CHRIST, and, about six hundred years afterwards, established their monarchy, had not carried with them the letters and learning, which they and the *Chinese* had possessed in common; but my principal argument is, that the *Hindu* or *Egyptian* idolatry has prevailed in *Japan* from the earliest ages; and among the idols worshipped, according to KÆMPFER, in that country, before the innovations of SA'CYA or BUDDHA, whom the *Japanese* also call AMIDA,

we find many of those, which we see every day in the temples of *Bengal*; particularly *the goddesses with many arms*, representing the powers of Nature, in *Egypt* named *ISIS* and here *ISA'NI'* or *ISI'*, whose image, as it is exhibited by the *German* traveller, all the *Bráhmans*, to whom I showed it, immediately recognized with a mixture of pleasure and enthusiasm. It is very true, that the *Chinese* differ widely from the natives of *Japan* in their vernacular dialects, in external manners, and perhaps in the strength of their mental faculties; but as wide a difference is observable among all the nations of the *Gothick* family; and we might account even for a greater dissimilarity, by considering the number of ages, during which the several swarms have been separated from the great *Indian* hive, to which they primarily belonged. The modern *Japanese* gave *KÆMPFER* the idea of polished *Tartars*; and it is reasonable to believe, that the people of *Japan*, who were originally *Hindus* of the martial class and advanced farther eastward than the *Chinas*, have, like them, insensibly changed their features and characters by intermarriages with various *Tartarian* tribes, whom they found loosely scattered over their isles, or who afterwards fixed their abode in them.

Having now shown in five discourses, that the *Arabs* and *Tartars* were originally distinct races,

while the *Hindus*, *Chinese*, and *Japanese* proceeded from another ancient stem, and that all the three stems may be traced to *Iran*, as to a common centre, from which it is highly probable, that they diverged in various directions about four thousand years ago, I may seem to have accomplished my design of investigating the origin of the *Asiatick* nations; but the questions, which I undertook to discuss, are not yet ripe for a strict analytical argument; and it will first be necessary to examine with scrupulous attention all the detached or insulated races of men, who either inhabit the borders of *India*, *Arabia*, *Tartary*, *Persia*, and *China*, or are interpersed in the mountainous and uncultivated parts of those extensive regions. To this examination I shall, at our next annual meeting, allot an entire discourse; and if, after all our inquiries, no more than *three* primitive races can be found, it will be a subsequent consideration, whether those three stocks had one common root, and, if they had, by what means that root was preserved amid the violent shocks, which our whole globe appears evidently to have sustained.

THE EIGHTH  
ANNIVERSARY DISCOURSE,

DELIVERED 24 FEBRUARY, 1791.

BY

THE PRESIDENT.

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GENTLEMEN,

WE have taken a general view, at our five last annual meetings, of as many celebrated nations, whom we have proved, as far as the subject admits of proof, to have descended from three primitive stocks, which we call for the present *Indian, Arabian, Tartarian*; and we have nearly travelled over all *Asia*, if not with a perfect coincidence of sentiment, at least, with as much unanimity, as can be naturally expected in a large body of men, each of whom must assert it as his right, and consider it as his duty, to decide on all points for himself, and never to decide on obscure points without the best evidence, that can possibly be adduced: our travels will this day be concluded, but our historical researches would have been left incomplete, if we had passed without attention over the numerous

races of borderers, who have long been established on the limits of *Arabia, Persia, India, China,* and *Tartary*; over the wild tribes residing in the mountainous parts of those extensive regions; and the more civilized inhabitants of the islands annexed by geographers to their *Asiatick* division of this globe.

Let us take our departure from *Idume* near the gulf of *Elanitis*, and, having encircled *Asia*, with such deviations from our course as the subject may require, let us return to the point, from which we began; endeavouring, if we are able, to find a nation, who may clearly be shown, by just reasoning from their language, religion, and manners, to be neither *Indians, Arabs,* nor *Tartars*, pure or mixed; but always remembering, that any small family detached in an early age from their parent stock, without letters, with few ideas beyond objects of the first necessity, and consequently with few words, and fixing their abode on a range of mountains, in an island, or even in a wide region before uninhabited, might in four or five centuries people their new country, and would necessarily form a new language with no perceptible traces, perhaps, of that spoken by their ancestors. *Edom* or *Idume*, and *Erythra* or *Phœnice*, had originally, as many believe, a similar meaning, and were derived from words denoting a *red* colour;



but, whatever be their derivation, it seems indubitable, that a race of men were anciently settled in *Idume* and in *Median*, whom the oldest and best *Greek* authors call *Erythreans*; who were very distinct from the *Arabs*; and whom, from the concurrence of many strong testimonies, we may safely refer to the *Indian* stem. M. D'HERBELOT mentions a tradition (which he treats, indeed, as a fable), that a colony of those *Idumeans* had migrated from the northern shores of the *Erythrean* sea, and sailed across the *Mediterranean* to *Europe*, at the time fixed by Chronologers for the passage of EVANDER with his *Arcadians* into *Italy*, and that both *Greeks* and *Romans* were the progeny of those emigrants. It is not on vague and suspected traditions, that we must build our belief of such events; but NEWTON, who advanced nothing in science without demonstration, and nothing in history without such evidence as he thought conclusive, asserts from authorities, which he had carefully examined, that the *Idumean* voyagers "carried with them both arts and sciences, among which were their astronomy, navigation, and letters; for in *Idume*, says he, they had letters, and names for constellations, before the days of JOB, who mentions them." JOB, indeed, or the author of the book, which takes its name from him, was of the *Arabian* stock,

as the language of that sublime work incontestably proves; but the invention and propagation of letters and astronomy are by all so justly ascribed to the *Indian* family, that, if STRABO and HERODOTUS were not grossly deceived, the adventurous *Idumeans*, who first gave names to the stars, and hazarded long voyages in ships of their own construction, could be no other than a branch of the *Hindu* race: in all events, there is no ground for believing them of a *fourth* distinct lineage; and we need say no more of them, till we meet them again, on our return, under the name of *Phenicians*.

As we pass down the formidable sea, which rolls over its coral bed between the coast of the *Arabs*, or those, who speak the pure language of ISMAÏL, and that of the *Ajams*, or those, who *mutter it barbarously*, we find no certain traces, on the *Arabian* side, of any people, who were not originally *Arabs* of the genuine or mixed breed: anciently, perhaps, there were *Troglodytes* in part of the peninsula, but they seem to have been long supplanted by the *Nomades*, or wandering herdsmen; and who those *Troglodytes* were, we shall see very clearly, if we deviate a few moments from our intended path, and make a short excursion into countries very lately explored on the *Western*, or *African*, side of the Red Sea.

That the written *Abyssinian* language, which we call *Ethiopic*, is a dialect of old *Chaldean*, and a sister of *Arabick* and *Hebrew*, we know with certainty, not only from the great multitude of identical words, but (which is a far stronger proof) from the similar grammatical arrangement of the several idioms: we know at the same time, that it is written, like all the *Indian* characters, from the left hand to the right, and that the vowels are annexed, as in *Dévanágarí*, to the consonants; with which they form a syllabick system extremely clear and convenient, but disposed in a less artificial order than the system of letters now exhibited in the *Sanscrit* grammars; whence it may justly be inferred, that the order contrived by PA'NINI or his disciples is comparatively modern; and I have no doubt, from a cursory examination of many old inscriptions on pillars and in caves, which have obligingly been sent to me from all parts of *India*, that the *Nágarí* and *Ethiopian* letters had at first a similar form. It has long been my opinion, that the *Abyssinians* of the *Arabian* stock, having no symbols of their own to represent articulate sounds, borrowed those of the black pagans, whom the *Greeks* call *Troglodytes*, from their primeval habitations in natural caverns, or in mountains excavated by their own labour: they were probably the first inhabitants of *Africa*, where they be-

came in time the builders of magnificent cities, the founders of seminaries for the advancement of science and philosophy, and the inventors (if they were not rather the importers) of symbolical characters. I believe on the whole, that the *Ethiops* of *Meroë* were the same people with the first *Egyptians*, and consequently, as it might easily be shown, with the original *Hindus*. To the ardent and intrepid Mr. BRUCE, whose travels are to my taste uniformly agreeable and satisfactory, though he thinks very differently from me on the language and genius of the *Arabs*, we are indebted for more important, and, I believe, more accurate, information concerning the nations established near the *Nile* from its fountains to its mouths, than all *Europe* united could before have supplied; but, since he has not been at the pains to compare the seven languages, of which he has exhibited a specimen, and since I have not leisure to make the comparison, I must be satisfied with observing, on his authority, that the dialects of the *Gafots* and the *Gallas*, the *Agows* of both races, and the *Falashas*, who must originally have used a *Chaldean* idiom, were never preserved in writing, and the *Ambarick* only in modern times: they must, therefore, have been for ages in fluctuation, and can lead, perhaps, to no certain conclusion as to the origin of the several tribes, who an-

ciently spoke them. It is very remarkable, as Mr. BRUCE and Mr. BRYANT have proved, that the *Greeks* gave the appellation of *Indians* both to the southern nations of *Africk* and to the people, among we now live; nor is it less observable, that, according to EPHORUS quoted by STRABO, they called all the southern nations in the world *Ethiopians*, thus using *Indian* and *Ethiop* as convertible terms: but we must leave the gymnosophists of *Ethiopia*, who seem to have professed the doctrines of BUDDHA, and enter the great *Indian* ocean, of which their *Asiatick* and *African* brethren were probably the first navigators.

On the islands near *Yemen* we have little to remark: they appear now to be peopled chiefly by *Mobammedans*, and afford no marks of discrimination, with which I am acquainted, either in language or manners; but I cannot bid farewell to the coast of *Arabia*, without assuring you, that, whatever may be said of *Ommán*, and the *Scytbian* colonies, who, it is imagined, were formerly settled there, I have met with no trace in the maritime part of *Yemen*, from *Aden* to *Mafkat*, of any nation, who were not either *Arabs* or *Abyssinian* invaders.

Between that country and *Irán* are some islands, which, from their insignificance in our present inquiry, may here be neglected; and, as

to the *Curds*, or other independent races, who inhabit the branches of *Taurus* or the banks of *Euphrates* and *Tigris*, they have, I believe, no written language, nor any certain memorials of their origin: it has, indeed, been asserted by travellers, that a race of wanderers in *Diyárbecr* yet speak the *Cbaldaick* of our scripture; and the rambling *Turcmáns* have retained, I imagine, some traces of their *Tartarian* idioms; but, since no vestige appears, from the gulf of *Persia* to the rivers *Cur* and *Aras*, of any people distinct from the *Arabs*, *Persians*, or *Tartars*, we may conclude, that no such people exists in the *Iranian* mountains, and return to those, which separate *Irán* from *India*. The principal inhabitants of the mountains, called *Pársici*, where they run towards the west, *Parveti*, from a known *Sanscrit* word, where they turn in an eastern direction, and *Paropamisus*, where they join *Imaus* in the north, were anciently distinguished among the *Bráhmans* by the name of *Deradas*, but seem to have been destroyed or expelled by the numerous tribes of *Afgháns* or *Patans*, among whom are the *Balójas*, who give their name to a mountainous district; and there is very solid ground for believing, that the *Afgháns* descended from the *Jews*; because they sometimes in confidence avow that unpopular origin, which in general they sedulously conceal,

and which other *Muselmans* positively assert ; because *Hazaret*, which appears to be the *Afarreb* of *ESDRAS*, is one of their territories ; and, principally, because their language is evidently a dialect of the scriptural *Chaldaick*.

We come now to the river *Sindhu* and the country named from it : near its mouths we find a district, called by *NEARCHUS*, in his journal, *Sangada* ; which *M. D'ANVILLE* justly supposes to be the seat of the *Sanganians*, a barbarous and piratical nation mentioned by modern travellers, and well known at present by our countrymen in the west of *India*. *Mr. MALET*, now resident at *Puna* on the part of the *British* government, procured at my request the *Sanganian* letters, which are a sort of *Nágarí*, and a specimen of their language, which is apparently derived, like other *Indian* dialects, from the *Sanscrit* ; nor can I doubt, from the descriptions, which I have received, of their persons and manners, that they are *Pámeras*, as the *Bráhmans* call them, or outcast *Hindus*, immemorially separated from the rest of the nation. It seems agreed, that the singular people, called *Egyptians*, and, by corruption, *Gypsies*, passed the *Mediterranean* immediately from *Egypt* ; and their motley language, of which *Mr. GRELLMANN* exhibits a copious vocabulary, contains so many *Sanscrit* words, that their *Indian* origin can

hardly be doubted: the authenticity of that vocabulary seems established by a multitude of *Gypsy* words, as *angár*, charcoal; *cáshb*, wood; *pár*, a bank, *bbú*, earth, and a hundred more, for which the collector of them could find no parallel in the vulgar dialect of *Hindustán*, though we know them to be pure *Sanscrit* scarce changed in a single letter. A very ingenious friend, to whom this remarkable fact was imparted, suggested to me, that those very words might have been taken from old *Egyptian*, and that the *Gypsies* were *Troglodytes* from the rocks near *Thebes*, where a race of banditti still resemble them in their habits and features; but, as we have no other evidence of so strong an affinity between the popular dialects of old *Egypt* and *India*, it seems more probable, that the *Gypsies*, whom the *Italians* call *Zingaros*, and *Zinganos*, were no other than *Zinganians*, as M. D'ANVILLE also writes the word, who might, in some piratical expedition, have landed on the coast of *Arabia* or *Africa*, whence they might have rambled to *Egypt*, and at length have migrated, or been driven into *Europe*. To the kindness of Mr. MALET I am also indebted for an account of the *Boras*; a remarkable race of men inhabiting chiefly the cities of *Gujarát*, who, though *Muselmans* in religion, are *Jews* in features, genius, and manners: they form in



all places a distinct fraternity, and are every where noted for address in bargaining, for minute thrift, and constant attention to lucre, but profess total ignorance of their own origin; though it seems probable, that they came first with their brethren the *Afgbáns* to the borders of *India*, where they learned in time to prefer a gainful and secure occupation in populous towns to perpetual wars and laborious exertions on the mountains. As to the *Moplas*, in the western parts of the *Indian* empire, I have seen their books in *Arabick*, and am persuaded, that, like the people called *Malays*, they descended from *Arabian* traders and mariners after the age of **MUHAMMED**.

On the continent of *India*, between the river *Vipása*, or *Hypbafis*, to the west, the mountains of *Tripura* and *Camarúpa* to the east, and *Himálaya* to the north, we find many races of wild people with more or less of that pristine ferocity, which induced their ancestors to secede from the civilized inhabitants of the plains and valleys: in the most ancient *Sanscrit* books they are called *Sacas*, *Cirátas*, *Cólas*, *Pulinđas*, *Barbaras*, and are all known to *Europeans*, though not all by their true names; but many *Hindu* pilgrims, who have travelled through their haunts, have fully described them to me; and I have found reasons for believing, that they sprang

from the old *Indian* stem, though some of them were soon intermixed with the first ramblers from *Tartary*, whose language seems to have been the basis of that now spoken by the *Moguls*.

We come back to the *Indian* islands, and hasten to those, which lie to the south-east of *Silán*, or *Taprobane*; for *Silán* itself, as we know from the languages, letters, religion, and old monuments of its various inhabitants, was peopled beyond time of memory by the *Hindu* race, and formerly, perhaps, extended much farther to the west and to the south, so as to include *Lancà*, or the equinoctial point of the *Indian* astronomers; nor can we reasonably doubt, that the same enterprising family planted colonies in the other isles of the same ocean from the *Malayadwipas*, which take their name from the mountain of *Malaya*, to the *Moluccas*, or *Mallicás*, and probably far beyond them. Captain FORREST assured me, that he found the isle of *Bali* (a great name in the historical poems of *India*) chiefly peopled by *Hindus*, who worshipped the same idols, which he had seen in this province; and that of *Madburà* must have been so denominated, like the well known territory in the western peninsula, by a nation, who understood *Sanscrit*. We need not be surprized, that M. D'ANVILLE was unable to assign a rea-

son, why the *Jabadios*, or *Yavadwipa*, of PRO-  
 LEMY was rendered in the old *Latin* version the  
 isle of *Barley*; but we must admire the inqui-  
 sitive spirit and patient labour of the *Greeks* and  
*Romans*, whom nothing observable seems to  
 have escaped: *Yava* means *barley* in *Sanscrit*;  
 and, though that word, or its regular derivative,  
 be now applied solely to *Java*, yet the great  
*French* geographer adduces very strong reasons  
 for believing, that the ancients applied it to *Su-  
 matra*. In whatever way the name of the last  
 mentioned island may be written by *Europeans*,  
 it is clearly an *Indian* word, implying *abundance*  
 or *excellence*; but we cannot help wondering,  
 that neither the natives of it, nor the best in-  
 formed of our *Pandits*, know it by any such ap-  
 pellation; especially as it still exhibits visible  
 traces of a primeval connexion with *India*: from  
 the very accurate and interesting account of it  
 by a learned and ingenious member of our own  
 body, we discover, without any recourse to ety-  
 mological conjecture, that multitudes of pure  
*Sanscrit* words occur in the principal dialects of  
 the *Sumatrans*; that, among their laws, two  
 positive rules concerning *sureties* and *interest* ap-  
 pear to be taken word for word from the *Indian*  
 legislators NA'RED and HA'RITA; and, what is  
 yet more observable, that the system of letters,  
 used by the people of *Rejang* and *Lampun*, has

the same artificial order with the *Dévanâgari*; but in every series one letter is omitted, because it is never found in the languages of those islanders. If Mr. MARSDEN has proved (as he firmly believes, and as we, from our knowledge of his accuracy, may fairly presume) that clear vestiges of one ancient language are discernible in all the insular dialects of the southern seas from *Madagascar* to the *Philippines* and even to the remotest islands lately discovered, we may infer from the specimens in his account of *Sumatra*, that the parent of them all was no other than the *Sanscrit*; and with this observation, having nothing of consequence to add on the *Chinese* isles or on those of *Japan*, I leave the farthest eastern verge of this continent, and turn to the countries, now under the government of *China*, between the northern limits of *India*, and the extensive domain of those *Tartars*, who are still independent.

That the people of *Potyid* or *Tibet* were *Hindus*, who engrafted the heresies of BUDDHA on their old mythological religion, we know from the researches of CASSIANO, who long had resided among them; and whose disquisitions on their language and letters, their tenets and forms of worship, are inserted by GIORGI in his curious but prolix compilation, which I have had the patience to read from the first to the last of nine

hundred rugged pages : their characters are apparently *Indian*, but their language has now the disadvantage of being written with more letters than are ever pronounced ; for, although it was anciently *Sanscrit* and polyfyllabick, it seems at present, from the influence of *Cbinese* manners, to consist of monofyllables, to form which, with some regard to grammatical derivation, it has become necessary to suppress in common discourse many letters, which we see in their books ; and thus we are enabled to trace in their writing a number of *Sanscrit* words and phrases, which in their spoken dialect are quite undistinguishable. The two engravings in GIORGI'S book, from sketches by a *Tibetian* painter, exhibit a system of *Egyptian* and *Indian* mythology ; and a complete explanation of them would have done the learned author more credit than his fanciful etymologies, which are always ridiculous, and often grossly erroneous.

The *Tartars* having been wholly unlettered, as they freely confess, before their conversion to the religion of *Arabia*, we cannot but suspect, that the natives of *Eighür*, *Tancüt*, and *Khatà*, who had systems of letters and are even said to have cultivated liberal arts, were not of the *Tartarian*, but of the *Indian*, family ; and I apply the same remark to the nation, whom we call *Barmas*, but who are known to the *Pandits* by

the name of *Brabmachinas*, and seem to have been the *Brachmani* of PTOLEMY: they were probably rambling *Hindus*, who, descending from the northern parts of the eastern peninsula, carried with them the letters now used in *Ava*, which are no more than a round *Nágari* derived from the square characters, in which the *Páli*, or sacred language of BUDDHA'S priests in that country, was anciently written; a language, by the way, very nearly allied to the *Sanscrit*, if we can depend on the testimony of M. DE LA LOUBERE; who, though always an acute observer, and in general a faithful reporter, of facts, is charged by CARPANIUS with having mistaken the *Barma* for the *Páli* letters; and when, on his authority, I spoke of the *Bali* writing to a young chief of *Aracan*, who read with facility the books of the *Barmas*, he corrected me with politeness, and assured me, that the *Páli* language was written by the priests in a much older character.

Let us now return eastward to the farthest *Asiatick* dominions of *Russia*, and, rounding them on the northeast, pass directly to the *Hyperboreans*; who, from all that can be learned of their old religion and manners, appear like the *Maffagetæ*, and some other nations usually considered as *Tartars*, to have been really of the *Gotbick*, that is of the *Hindu*, race; for I con-

fidently assume, that the *Goths* and the *Hindus* had originally the same language, gave the same appellations to the stars and planets, adored the same false deities, performed the same bloody sacrifices, and professed the same notions of rewards and punishments after death. I would not insist with M. BAILLY, that the people of *Finland* were *Goths*, merely because they have the word *ship* in their language; while the rest of it appears wholly distinct from any of the *Gothick* idioms: the publishers of the Lord's Prayer in many languages represent the *Finnish* and *Lapponian* as nearly alike, and the *Hungarian* as totally different from them; but this must be an error, if it be true, that a *Russian* author has lately traced the *Hungarian* from its primitive seat between the *Caspian* and the *Euxine*, as far as *Lapland* itself; and, since the *Huns* were confessedly *Tartars*, we may conclude, that all the northern languages, except the *Gothick*, had a *Tartarian* origin, like that universally ascribed to the various branches of *Sclavonian*.

On the *Armenian*, which I never studied, because I could not hear of any original compositions in it, I can offer nothing decisive; but am convinced, from the best information procurable in *Bengal*, that its basis was ancient *Persian* of the same *Indian* stock with the *Zend*, and that

It has been gradually changed since the time, when *Armenia* ceased to be a province of *Iran*: the letters, in which it now appears, are allowed to be comparatively modern; and, though the learned editor of the tract by CARPANIUS on the literature of *Ava*, compares them with the *Páli* characters, yet, if they be not, as I should rather imagine, derived from the *Pablavi*, they are probably an invention of some learned *Armenian* in the middle of the fifth century. MOSES of *Kboren*, than whom no man was more able to elucidate the subject, has inserted in his historical work a disquisition on the language of *Armenia*, from which we might collect some curious information, if the present occasion required it; but to all the races of men, who inhabit the branches of *Caucasus* and the northern limits of *Iran*, I apply the remark, before announced generally, that ferocious and hardy tribes, who retire for the sake of liberty to mountainous regions, and form by degrees a separate nation, must also form in the end a separate language by agreeing on new words to express new ideas; provided that the language, which they carried with them, was not fixed by writing and sufficiently copious. The *Armenian* damsels are said by STRABO to have sacrificed in the temple of the goddess ANAITIS, whom we know, from other authorities, to be the NA'HÍ'D,



or VENUS, of the old *Persians*; and it is for many reasons highly probable, that one and the same religion prevailed through the whole empire of CYRUS.

Having travelled round the continent, and among the islands, of *Asia*, we come again to the coast of the *Mediterranean*; and the principal nations of antiquity, who first demand our attention, are the *Greeks* and *Phrygians*, who, though differing somewhat in manners, and perhaps in dialect, had an apparent affinity in religion as well as in language: the *Dorian*, *Ionian*, and *Eolian* families having emigrated from *Europe*, to which it is universally agreed that they first passed from *Egypt*, I can add nothing to what has been advanced concerning them in former discourses; and, no written monuments of old *Phrygia* being extant, I shall only observe, on the authority of the *Greeks*, that the grand object of mysterious worship in that country was the Mother of the Gods, or Nature personified, as we see her among the *Indians* in a thousand forms and under a thousand names. She was called in the *Phrygian* dialect MA', and represented in a car drawn by lions, with a drum in her hand, and a towered coronet on her head: her mysteries (which seem to be alluded to in the *Mosaick* law) are solemnized at the autumnal equinox in these provinces,

where she is named, in one of her characters, MA', is adored, in all of them, as the great Mother, is figured sitting on a lion, and appears in some of her temples with a diadem or mitre of turrets; a drum is called *dindima* both in *Sanscrit* and *Pbrygian*; and the title of *Dindy-mene* seems rather derived from that word, than from the name of a mountain. The DIANA of *Epbefus* was manifestly the same goddess in the character of productive Nature; and the AS-TARTE of the *Syrians* and *Pbenicians* (to whom we now return) was, I doubt not, the same in another form: I may on the whole assure you, that the learned works of SELDEN and JABLONSKI, on the Gods of *Syria* and *Egypt*, would receive more illustration from the little *Sanscrit* book, entitled *Cbandi*, than from all the fragments of oriental mythology, that are dispersed in the whole compass of *Grecian*, *Roman*, and *Hebrew* literature. We are told, that the *Pbenicians*, like the *Hindus*, adored the Sun, and asserted water to be the first of created things; nor can we doubt, that *Syria*, *Samaria*, and *Pbenice*, or the long strip of land on the shore of the *Mediterranean*, were anciently peopled by a branch of the *Indian* stock, but were afterwards inhabited by that race, which for the present we call *Arabian*: in all three the oldest religion was the *Assyrian*, as it is called by SELDEN, and the

*Samaritan* letters appear to have been the same at first with those of *Phenice*; but the *Syriack* language, of which ample remains are preserved, and the *Punick*, of which we have a clear specimen in *PLAUTUS* and on monuments lately brought to light, were indisputably of a *Chaldaick*, or *Arabick*, origin.

The seat of the first *Phenicians* having extended to *Idume*, with which we began, we have now completed the circuit of *Asia*; but we must not pass over in silence a most extraordinary people, who escaped the attention, as *BARROW* observes more than once, of the diligent and inquisitive *HERODOTUS*: I mean the people of *Judea*, whose language demonstrates their affinity with the *Arabs*, but whose manners, literature, and history are wonderfully distinguished from the rest of mankind. *BARROW* loads them with the severe, but just, epithets of malignant, unsocial, obstinate, distrustful, sordid, changeable, turbulent; and describes them as furiously zealous in succouring their own countrymen, but implacably hostile to other nations; yet, with all the sottish perverseness, the stupid arrogance, and the brutal atrocity of their character, they had the peculiar merit, among all races of men under heaven, of preserving a rational and pure system of devotion in the midst of wild polytheism, inhuman or obscene rites, and a dark labyrinth

of errors produced by ignorance and supported by interested fraud. Theological inquiries are no part of my present subject; but I cannot refrain from adding, that the collection of tracts, which we call from their excellence *the Scriptures*, contain, independently of a divine origin, more true sublimity, more exquisite beauty, purer morality, more important history, and finer strains both of poetry and eloquence, than could be collected within the same compass from all other books, that were ever composed in any age or in any idiom. The two parts, of which the Scriptures consist, are connected by a chain of compositions, which bear no resemblance in form or style to any that can be produced from the stores of *Grecian, Indian, Persian, or even Arabian*, learning: the antiquity of those compositions no man doubts; and the unstrained application of them to events long subsequent to their publication is a solid ground of belief, that they were genuine predictions, and consequently inspired; but, if any thing be the absolute exclusive property of each individual, it is his belief; and, I hope, I should be one of the last men living, who could harbour a thought of obtruding my own belief on the free minds of others. I mean only to assume, what, I trust, will be readily conceded, that the first *Hebrew* historian must be entitled, merely as such, to an

equal degree of credit, in his account of all civil transactions, with any other historian of antiquity: how far that most ancient writer confirms the result of our inquiries into the genealogy of nations, I propose to show at our next anniversary meeting; when, after an approach to demonstration, in the strict method of the old analysis, I shall resume the whole argument concisely and synthetically; and shall then have condensed in seven discourses a mass of evidence, which, if brevity had not been my object, might have been expanded into seven large volumes with no other trouble than that of holding the pen; but (to borrow a turn of expression from one of our poets) “for what I have produced, I claim only your indulgence; it is for what I have suppressed, that I am entitled to your thanks.”

DISCOURSE THE NINTH.  
ON  
THE ORIGIN AND FAMILIES OF NATIONS.

DELIVERED 23 FEBRUARY, 1792.

BY  
THE PRESIDENT.

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YOU have attended, gentlemen, with so much indulgence to my discourses on the five *Asiatick* nations, and on the various tribes established along their several borders or interspersed over their mountains, that I cannot but flatter myself with an assurance of being heard with equal attention, while I trace to one centre the three great families, from which those nations appear to have proceeded, and then hazard a few conjectures on the different courses, which they may be supposed to have taken toward the countries, in which we find them settled at the dawn of all genuine history.

Let us begin with a short review of the propositions, to which we have gradually been led, and separate such as are morally certain, from such as are only probable: that the first race of

*Persians* and *Indians*, to whom we may add the *Romans* and *Greeks*, the *Goths*, and the old *Egyptians* or *Ethiops*, originally spoke the same language and professed the same popular faith, is capable, in my humble opinion, of incontestable proof; that the *Jews* and *Arabs*, the *Assyrians*, or second *Persian* race, the people who spoke *Syriack*, and a numerous tribe of *Abyssinians*, used one primitive dialect wholly distinct from the idiom just mentioned, is, I believe, undisputed, and, I am sure, indisputable; but that the settlers in *China* and *Japan* had a common origin with the *Hindus*, is no more than highly probable; and, that all the *Tartars*, as they are inaccurately called, were primarily of a third separate branch, totally differing from the two others in language, manners, and features, may indeed be plausibly conjectured, but cannot, for the reasons alledged in a former essay, be perspicuously shown, and for the present therefore must be merely assumed. Could these facts be verified by the best attainable evidence, it would not, I presume, be doubted, that the whole earth was peopled by a variety of shoots from the *Indian*, *Arabian*, and *Tartarian* branches, or by such intermixtures of them, as, in a course of ages, might naturally have happened.

Now I admit without hesitation the aphorism of LINNÆUS, that “in the beginning GOD

“ created one pair only of every living species, “ which has a diversity of sex ;” but, since that incomparable naturalist argues principally from the wonderful diffusion of vegetables, and from an hypothesis, that the water on this globe has been continually subsiding, I venture to produce a shorter and closer argument in support of his doctrine. That *Nature*, of which simplicity appears a distinguishing attribute, *does nothing in vain*, is a maxim in philosophy ; and against those, who deny maxims, we cannot dispute ; but *it is vain and superfluous to do by many means what may be done by fewer*, and this is another axiom received into courts of judicature from the schools of philosophers : *we must not*, therefore, says our great NEWTON, *admit more causes of natural things, than those, which are true, and sufficiently account for natural phenomena* ; but it is true, that one pair *at least* of every living species must at first have been created ; and that one human pair was sufficient for the population of our globe in a period of no considerable length (on the very moderate supposition of lawyers and political arithmeticians, that every pair of ancestors left on an average two children, and each of them two more), is evident from the rapid increase of numbers in geometrical progression, so well known to those, who have ever taken the trouble to sum a series



of as many terms, as they suppose generations of men in two or three thousand years. It follows, that the Author of Nature (for all nature proclaims its divine author) created but one pair of our species; yet, had it not been (among other reasons) for the devastations, which history has recorded, of water and fire, wars, famine, and pestilence, this earth would not now have had room for its multiplied inhabitants. If the human race then be, as we may confidently assume, of one natural species, they must all have proceeded from one pair; and if perfect justice be, as it is most indubitably, an essential attribute of GOD, that pair must have been gifted with sufficient wisdom and strength to be virtuous, and, as far as their nature admitted, happy, but intrusted with freedom of will to be vicious and consequently degraded: whatever might be their option, they must people in time the region where they first were established, and their numerous descendants must necessarily seek new countries, as inclination might prompt, or accident lead, them; they would of course migrate in separate families and clans, which, forgetting by degrees the language of their common progenitor, would form new dialects to convey new ideas, both simple and complex; natural affection would unite them at first, and a sense of reciprocal utility, the great and only cement of

social union in the absence of publick honour and justice, for which in evil times it is a general substitute, would combine them at length in communities more or less regular; laws would be proposed by a part of each community, but enacted by the whole; and governments would be variously arranged for the happiness or misery of the governed, according to their own virtue and wisdom, or depravity and folly; so that, in less than three thousand years, the world would exhibit the same appearances, which we may actually observe on it in the age of the great *Arabian* impostor.

On that part of it, to which our united researches are generally confined, we see *five* races of men peculiarly distinguished, in the time of MUHAMMED, for their multitude and extent of dominion; but we have reduced them to *three*, because we can discover no more, that essentially differ in language, religion, manners, and other known characteristics: now those three races, how variously soever they may at present be dispersed and intermixed, must (if the preceding conclusions be justly drawn) have migrated originally from a central country, to find which is the problem proposed for solution. Suppose it solved; and give any arbitrary name to that centre: let it, if you please, be *Iran*. The three primitive languages, therefore, must at first have

been concentrated in *Iràn*, and there only in fact we see traces of them in the earliest historical age; but, for the sake of greater precision, conceive the whole empire of *Iràn*, with all its mountains and valleys, plains and rivers, to be every way infinitely diminished; the first winding courses, therefore, of all the nations proceeding from it by land, and nearly at the same time, will be little right lines, but without interfections, because those courses could not have thwarted and crossed one another: if then you consider the seats of all the migrating nations as points in a surrounding figure, you will perceive, that the several rays, diverging from *Iràn*, may be drawn to them without any interfection; but this will not happen, if you assume as a centre *Arabia*, or *Egypt*; *India*, *Tartary*, or *China*: it follows, that *Iràn*, or *Persia* (I contend for the meaning, not the name), was the central country, which we sought. This mode of reasoning I have adopted, not from any affectation (as you will do me the justice to believe) of a scientifick diction, but for the sake of conciseness and variety, and from a wish to avoid repetitions; the substance of my argument having been detailed in a different form at the close of another discourse; nor does the argument in any form rise to demonstration, which the question by no means admits: it amounts, however, to such a proof,

grounded on written evidence and credible testimony, as all mankind hold sufficient for decisions affecting property, freedom, and life.

Thus then have we proved, that the inhabitants of *Asia*, and consequently, as it might be proved, of the whole earth, sprang from three branches of one stem : and that those branches have shot into their present state of luxuriance in a period comparatively short, is apparent from a fact universally acknowledged, that we find no certain monument, or even probable tradition, of nations planted, empires and states raised, laws enacted, cities built, navigation improved, commerce encouraged, arts invented, or letters contrived, above twelve or at most fifteen or sixteen centuries before the birth of CHRIST, and from another fact, which cannot be controverted, that seven hundred or a thousand years would have been fully adequate to the supposed propagation, diffusion and establishment of the human race.

The most ancient history of that race, and the oldest composition perhaps in the world, is a work in *Hebrew*, which we may suppose at first, for the sake of our argument, to have no higher authority than any other work of equal antiquity, that the researches of the curious had accidentally brought to light : it is ascribed to MUSAH ; for so he writes his own name, which,

after the *Greeks* and *Romans*, we have changed into *MOSES* ; and, though it was manifestly his object to give an historical account of a single family, he has introduced it with a short view of the primitive world, and his introduction has been divided, perhaps improperly, into *eleven* chapters. After describing with awful sublimity the creation of this universe, he asserts, that one pair of every animal species was called from nothing into existence ; that the human pair were strong enough to be happy, but free to be miserable ; that, from delusion and temerity, they disobeyed their supreme benefactor, whose goodness could not pardon them consistently with his justice ; and that they received a punishment adequate to their disobedience, but softened by a mysterious promise to be accomplished in their descendants, We cannot but believe, on the supposition just made of a history uninspired, that these facts were delivered by tradition from the first pair, and related by *MOSES* in a figurative style ; not in that sort of allegory, which rhetoricians describe as a mere assemblage of metaphors, but in the symbolical mode of writing adopted by eastern sages, to embellish and dignify historical truth ; and, if this were a time for such illustrations, we might produce the same account of the *creation* and the *fall*, expressed by symbols very nearly similar, from the *Puranas*

themselves, and even from the *Vēda*, which appears to stand next in antiquity to the five books of MOSES.

The sketch of antediluvian history, in which we find many dark passages, is followed by the narrative of a *deluge*, which destroyed the whole race of man, except four pairs; an historical fact admitted as true by every nation, to whose literature we have access, and particularly by the ancient *Hindus*, who have allotted an entire *Purāna* to the detail of that event, which they relate, as usual, in symbols or allegories. I concur most heartily with those, who insist, that, in proportion as any fact mentioned in history seems repugnant to the course of nature, or, in one word, miraculous, the stronger evidence is required to induce a rational belief of it; but we hear without incredulity, that cities have been overwhelmed by eruptions from burning mountains, territories laid waste by hurricanes, and whole islands depopulated by earthquakes: if then we look at the firmament sprinkled with innumerable stars; if we conclude by a fair analogy, that every star is a sun, attracting, like ours, a system of inhabited planets; and if our ardent fancy, soaring hand in hand with sound reason, waft us beyond the visible sphere into regions of immensity, disclosing other celestial expanses and other systems of suns and worlds on all sides

without number or end, we cannot but consider the submerſion of our little ſpheroid as an infinitely leſs event in reſpect of the immeaſurable univerſe, than the deſtruction of a city or an iſle in reſpect of this habitable globe. Let a general flood, however, be ſuppoſed improbable in proportion to the magnitude of ſo ruinous an event, yet the concurrent evidences of it are completely adequate to the ſuppoſed improbability; but, as we cannot here expatiate on thoſe proofs, we proceed to the fourth important fact recorded in the *Mofaick* hiſtory; I mean the firſt propagation and early diſperſion of mankind *in ſeparate families* to ſeparate places of reſidence.

Three ſons of the juſt and virtuous man, whoſe lineage was preſerved from the general inundation, travelled, we are told, as they began to multiply, in *three* large diviſions variously ſubdivided: the children of YA'FET ſeem, from the traces of *Sklavonian* names, and the mention of their being *enlarged*, to have ſpread themſelves far and wide, and to have produced the race, which, for want of a correſt appellation, we call *Tartarian*; the colonies, formed by the ſons of HAM and SHEM, appear to have been nearly ſimultaneous; and, among thoſe of the latter branch, we find ſo many names incontrovertibly preſerved at this hour in *Arabia*, that we cannot

hesitate in pronouncing them the same people, whom hitherto we have denominated *Arabs*; while the former branch, the most powerful and adventurous of whom were the progeny of CUSH, MISR, and RAMA (names remaining unchanged in *Sanscrit*, and highly revered by the *Hindus*), were, in all probability, the race, which I call *Indian*, and to which we may now give any other name, that may seem more proper and comprehensive.

The general introduction to the *Jewish* history closes with a very concise and obscure account of a presumptuous and mad attempt, by a particular colony, to build a splendid city and raise a fabrick of immense height, independently of the divine aid, and, it should seem, in defiance of the divine power; a project, which was baffled by means appearing at first view inadequate to the purpose, but ending in violent dissention among the projectors, and in the ultimate separation of them: this event also seems to be recorded by the ancient *Hindus* in two of their *Puranas*; and it will be proved, I trust, on some future occasion, that *the lion bursting from a pillar to destroy a blaspheming giant*, and *the dwarf, who beguiled and held in derision the magnificent BELI*, are one and the same story related in a symbolical style.

Now these primeval events are described as



having happened between the *Oxus* and *Euphrates*, the mountains of *Caucasus* and the borders of *India*, that is, within the limits of *Iran*; for, though most of the *Mosaick* names have been considerably altered, yet numbers of them remain unchanged: we still find *Harrán* in *Mesopotamia*, and travellers appear unanimous in fixing the site of ancient *Babel*.

Thus, on the preceding supposition, that the first eleven chapters of the book, which it is thought proper to call *Genesis*, are merely a preface to the oldest civil history now extant, we see the truth of them confirmed by antecedent reasoning, and by evidence in part highly probable, and in part certain; but the connection of the *Mosaick* history with that of the Gospel by a chain of sublime predictions unquestionably ancient, and apparently fulfilled, must induce us to think the *Hebrew* narrative more than human in its origin, and consequently true in every substantial part of it, though possibly expressed in figurative language; as many learned and pious men have believed, and as the most pious may believe without injury, and perhaps with advantage, to the cause of revealed religion. If *MOSES* then was endued with supernatural knowledge, it is no longer probable only, but absolutely certain, that the whole race of man proceeded from *Iran*, as from a centre, whence they

migrated at first in three great colonies; and that those three branches grew from a common stock, which had been miraculously preserved in a general convulsion and inundation of this globe.

Having arrived by a different path at the same conclusion with Mr. BRYANT as to one of those families, the most ingenious and enterprising of the three, but arrogant, cruel, and idolatrous, which we both conclude to be various shoots from the *Hamian* or *Amonian* branch, I shall add but little to my former observations on his profound and agreeable work, which I have thrice perused with increased attention and pleasure, though not with perfect acquiescence in the other less important parts of his plausible system. The sum of his argument seems reducible to three heads. First; "if the deluge really happened at the time recorded by MOSES, those nations, whose monuments are preserved or whose writings are accessible, must have retained memorials of an event so stupendous and comparatively so recent; but in fact they have retained such memorials:" this reasoning seems just, and the fact is true beyond controversy: Secondly; "those memorials were expressed by the race of HAM, before the use of letters, in rude sculpture or painting, and mostly in symbolical figures of the

“ *ark*, the eight persons concealed in it, and the  
 “ birds, which first were dismissed from it : this  
 “ fact is probable, but, I think, not sufficiently  
 “ ascertained.” Thirdly ; “ all ancient Mytho-  
 “ logy (except what was purely *Sabian*) had  
 “ its primary source in those various symbols  
 “ misunderstood ; so that ancient Mythology  
 “ stands now in the place of symbolical sculpture  
 “ or painting, and must be explained on the  
 “ same principles, on which we should begin to  
 “ decypher the originals, if they now existed :”  
 this part of the system is, in my opinion, carried  
 too far ; nor can I persuade myself (to give one  
 instance out of many) that the beautiful allegory  
 of CUPID and PSYCHE had the remotest allusion  
 to the deluge, or that HYMEN signified the *veil*,  
 which covered the patriarch and his family.  
 These propositions, however, are supported with  
 great ingenuity and solid erudition, but, unpro-  
 fitably for the argument, and unfortunately, per-  
 haps, for the fame of the work itself, recourse is  
 had to etymological conjecture, than which no  
 mode of reasoning is in general weaker or more  
 delusive. He, who professes to derive the words  
 of any one language from those of another, must  
 expose himself to the danger of perpetual errors,  
 unless he be perfectly acquainted with both ; yet  
 my respectable friend, though eminently skilled  
 in the idioms of *Greece* and *Rome*, has no fort

of acquaintance with any *Asiatick* dialect, except *Hebrew*; and he has consequently made mistakes, which every learner of *Arabick* and *Perſian* muſt inſtantly detect. Among *fiſty* radical words (*ma*, *taph*, and *ram* being included), *eighteen* are purely of *Arabian* origin, *twelve* merely *Indian*, and *ſeventeen* both *Sanſcrit* and *Arabick*, but in ſenſes totally different; while *two* are *Greek* only, and one *Egyptian*, or barbarous: if it be urged, that thoſe *radicals* (which ought ſurely to have concluded, inſtead of preceding, an *analytical* inquiry) are precious traces of the primitive language, from which all others were derived, or to which at leaſt they were ſubſequent, I can only declare my belief, that the language of *NOAH* is loſt irretrievably, and aſſure you, that after a diligent ſearch, I cannot find a ſingle word uſed in common by the *Arabian*, *Indian*, and *Tartar* families, before the intermixture of dialects occaſioned by *Mohammedan* conqueſts. There are, indeed, very obvious traces of the *Hamian* language, and ſome hundreds of words might be produced, which were formerly uſed promiſcuouſly by moſt nations of that race; but I beg leave, as a philologer, to enter my proteſt againſt conjectural etymology in hiſtorical reſearches, and principally againſt the licentiouſneſs of etymologiſts in tranſpoſing and inſerting letters, in ſubſtituting at pleaſure

any consonant for another of the same order, and in totally disregarding the vowels : for such permutations few radical words would be more convenient than CUS or CUSH, since, dentals being changed for dentals, and palatials for palatials, it instantly becomes *coot*, *goose*, and, by transposition, *duck*, all water-birds, and *evidently* fymbolical ; it next is the *goat* worshipped in *Egypt*, and, by a metathesis, the *dog* adored as an emblem of SIRIUS, or, more obviously, a *cat*, not the domestick animal, but a sort of ship, and, the *Catos*, or great sea-fish, of the *Dorians*. It will hardly be imagined, that I mean by this irony to insult an author, whom I respect and esteem ; but no consideration should induce me to assist by my silence in the diffusion of error ; and I contend, that almost any word or nation might be derived from any other, if such licences, as I am opposing, were permitted in etymological histories : when we find, indeed, the same words, letter for letter, and in a sense precisely the same, in different languages, we can scarce hesitate in allowing them a common origin ; and, not to depart from the example before us, when we see CUSH or CUS (for the *Sanscrit* name also is variously pronounced) among the sons of BRAHMA, that is, among the progenitors of the *Hindus*, and at the head of an ancient pedigree preserved in the *Rámáyan* ; when we meet with

his name again in the family of RA'MA ; when we know, that the name is venerated in the highest degree, and given to a sacred grass, described as a *Poa* by KOENIG, which is used with a thousand ceremonies in the oblations to fire, ordained by MENU to form the sacrificial zone of the *Bráhmans*, and solemnly declared in the *Véda* to have sprung up soon after the *deluge*, whence the *Pauránicks* consider it as *the bristly hair of the boar which supported the globe* ; when we add, that one of the seven *dwípas*, or great peninsulas of this earth, has the same appellation, we can hardly doubt that the CUSK of MOSES and VA'LMIC was the same personage and an ancestor of the *Indian* race.

From the testimonies adduced in the six last annual discourses, and from the additional proofs laid before you, or rather opened, on the present occasion, it seems to follow, that the only human family after the flood established themselves in the northern parts of *Iran* ; that, as they multiplied, they were divided into three distinct branches, each retaining little at first, and losing the whole by degrees, of their common primary language, but agreeing severally on new expressions for new ideas ; that the branch of YA'FET was *enlarged* in many scattered shoots over the north of *Europe* and *Asia*, diffusing themselves as far as the western and eastern seas, and, at

length in the infancy of navigation, beyond them both : that they cultivated no liberal arts, and had no use of letters, but formed a variety of dialects, as their tribes were variously ramified ; that, secondly, the children of HAM, who founded in *Iran* itself the monarchy of the first *Chaldeans*, invented letters, observed and named the luminaries of the firmament, calculated the known *Indian* period of *four hundred and thirty-two thousand years*, or an *hundred and twenty* repetitions of the *saros*, and contrived the old system of Mythology, partly allegorical, and partly grounded on idolatrous veneration for their sages and lawgivers ; that they were dispersed at various intervals and in various colonies over land and ocean ; that the tribes of MISR, CUSH, and RAMA settled in *Africk* and *India* ; while some of them, having improved the art of sailing, passed from *Egypt*, *Phenice*, and *Phrygia*, into *Italy* and *Greece*, which they found thinly peopled by former emigrants, of whom they supplanted some tribes, and united themselves with others ; whilst a swarm from the same hive moved by a northerly course into *Scandinavia*, and another, by the head of the *Oxus*, and through the passes of *Imaus*, into *Cashghar* and *Eighúr*, *Kbatá* and *Kboten*, as far as the territories of *Chin* and *Tancút*, where letters have been used and arts immemorially cultivated ; nor is it unreasonable

to believe, that some of them found their way from the eastern isles into *Mexico* and *Peru*, where traces were discovered of rude literature and Mythology analogous to those of *Egypt* and *India*; that, thirdly, the old *Chaldean* empire, being overthrown by the *Affyrians* under CAYUMERS, other migrations took place, especially into *India*, while the rest of SHEM's progeny, some of whom had before settled on the Red Sea, peopled the whole *Arabian* peninsula, pressing close on the nations of *Syria* and *Phenice*; that, lastly, from all the three families were detached many bold adventurers of an ardent spirit and a roving disposition, who disdained subordination and wandered in separate clans, till they settled in distant isles or in deserts and mountainous regions; that, on the whole, some colonies might have migrated before the death of their venerable progenitor, but that states and empires could scarce have assumed a regular form, till fifteen or sixteen hundred years before the *Christian* epoch, and that, for the first thousand years of that period, we have no history unmixed with fable, except that of the turbulent and variable, but eminently distinguished, nation descended from ABRAHAM.

My design, gentlemen, of tracing the origin and progress of the five principal nations, who have peopled *Asia*, and of whom there were



considerable remains in their several countries at the time of MUHAMMED'S birth, is now accomplished ; succinctly, from the nature of these essays ; imperfectly, from the darkness of the subject and scantiness of my materials, but clearly and comprehensively enough to form a basis for subsequent researches : you have seen, as distinctly as I am able to show, *who* those nations originally were, *whence* and *when* they moved toward their final stations ; and, in my future annual discourses, I propose to enlarge on the *particular advantages* to our country and to mankind, which may result from our sedulous and united inquiries into the history, science, and arts, of these *Asiatick* regions, especially of the *British* dominions in *India*, which we may consider as the centre (not of the human race, but) of our common exertions to promote its true interests ; and we shall concur, I trust, in opinion, that the race of man, to advance whose manly happiness is our duty and will of course be our endeavour, cannot long be happy without virtue, nor actively virtuous without freedom, nor securely free without rational knowledge.

THE TENTH  
ANNIVERSARY DISCOURSE,

DELIVERED 28 FEBRUARY, 1793.

BY

THE PRESIDENT.

ON ASIATICK HISTORY, CIVIL AND NATURAL.

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BEFORE our entrance, gentlemen, into the disquisition, promised at the close of my ninth annual discourse, on the *particular advantages*, which may be derived from our concurrent researches in *Asia*, it seems necessary to fix with precision the sense, in which we mean to speak of *advantage* or *utility*: now, as we have described the five *Asiatick* regions on their largest scale, and have expanded our conceptions in proportion to the magnitude of that wide field, we should use those words, which comprehend the fruit of all our inquiries, in their most extensive acceptation; including not only the solid conveniences and comforts of social life, but its elegances and innocent pleasures, and even the gratification of a natural and laudable curiosity; for, though labour be clearly the lot of man in

this world, yet, in the midst of his most active exertions, he cannot but feel the substantial benefit of every liberal amusement, which may lull his passions to rest, and afford him a sort of repose without the pain of total inaction, and the real usefulness of every pursuit, which may enlarge and diversify his ideas, without interfering with the principal objects of his civil station or economical duties; nor should we wholly exclude even the trivial and worldly sense of *utility*, which too many consider as merely synonymous with *lucre*, but should reckon among useful objects those practical, and by no means illiberal, arts, which may eventually conduce both to national and to private emolument. With a view then to *advantages* thus explained, let us examine every point in the whole circle of arts and sciences, according to the received order of their dependence on the faculties of the mind, their mutual connexion, and the different subjects, with which they are conversant: our inquiries indeed; of which Nature and Man are the primary objects, must of course be chiefly *Historical*; but, since we propose to investigate the *actions* of the several *Asiatick* nations, together with their respective progress in *science* and *art*, we may arrange our investigations under the same three heads, to which our *European* analysts have ingeniously reduced all the branches

of human knowledge ; and my present address to the society shall be confined to history, civil and natural, or the observation and remembrance of *mere facts*, independently of *ratiocination*, which belongs to philosophy, or of *imitations* and *substitutions*, which are the province of art.

Were a superior created intelligence to delineate a map of general knowledge (exclusively of that sublime and stupendous theology, which himself could only hope humbly to know by an infinite approximation) he would probably begin by tracing with NEWTON the system of the universe, in which he would assign the true place to our little globe ; and, having enumerated its various inhabitants, contents, and productions, would proceed to man in his natural station among animals, exhibiting a detail of all the knowledge attained or attainable by the human race ; and thus observing, perhaps, the same order, in which he had before described other beings in other inhabited worlds : but, though BACON seems to have had a similar reason for placing the history of Nature before that of Man, or the whole before one of its parts, yet, consistently with our chief object already mentioned, we may properly begin with the *civil history* of the five *Asiatick* nations, which necessarily comprises their Geography, or a de-

scription of the *places*, where they have acted, and their astronomy, which may enable us to fix with some accuracy the *time* of their actions: we shall thence be led to the history of such other *animals*, of such *minerals*, and of such *vegetables*, as they may be supposed to have found in their several migrations and settlements, and shall end with the *uses* to which they have applied, or may apply, the rich assemblage of natural substances.

I. IN the first place, we cannot surely deem it an inconsiderable advantage, that all our historical researches have confirmed the *Mosaick* accounts of the primitive world; and our testimony on that subject ought to have the greater weight, because, if the result of our observations had been totally different, we should nevertheless have published them, not indeed with equal pleasure, but with equal confidence; for *Truth is mighty, and, whatever be its consequences, must always prevail*: but, independently of our interest in corroborating the multiplied evidences of revealed religion, we could scarce gratify our minds with a more useful and rational entertainment, than the contemplation of those wonderful revolutions in kingdoms and states, which have happened within little more than four thousand years; revolutions, almost as fully demonstrative of an all-ruling Providence, as the

structure of the universe and the final causes, which are discernible in its whole extent and even in its minutest parts. Figure to your imaginations a moving picture of that eventful period, or rather a succession of crowded scenes rapidly changed. Three families migrate in different courses from one region; and, in about four centuries, establish very distant governments and various modes of society: *Egyptians, Indians, Goths, Phenicians, Celts, Greeks, Latians, Chinese, Peruvians, Mexicans*, all sprung from the same immediate stem, appear to start nearly at one time, and occupy at length those countries, to which they have given, or from which they have derived, their names: in twelve or thirteen hundred years more the *Greeks* overrun the land of their forefathers, invade *India*, conquer *Egypt*, and aim at universal dominion; but the *Romans* appropriate to themselves the whole empire of *Greece*, and carry their arms into *Britain*, of which they speak with haughty contempt: the *Goths*, in the fulness of time, break to pieces the unwieldy *Colossus* of *Roman* power, and seize on the whole of *Britain*, except its wild mountains; but even those wilds become subject to other invaders of the same *Gothick* lineage: during all these transactions, the *Arabs* possess both coasts of the Red Sea, subdue the old seat of their first progenitors, and

extend their conquests on one side, through *Africk*, into *Europe* itself; on another, beyond the borders of *India*, part of which they annex to their flourishing empire: in the same interval the *Tartars*, widely diffused over the rest of the globe, swarm in the north-east, whence they rush to complete the reduction of *CONSTANTINE*'s beautiful domains, to subjugate *China*, to raise in these *Indian* realms a dynasty splendid and powerful, and to ravage, like the two other families, the devoted regions of *Iran*: by this time the *Mexicans* and *Peruvians*, with many races of adventurers variously intermixed, have peopled the continent and isles of *America*, which the *Spaniards*, having restored their old government in *Europe*, discover and in part overcome: but a colony from *Britain*, of which *CICERO* ignorantly declared, that *it contained nothing valuable*, obtain the possession, and finally the sovereign dominion, of extensive *American* districts; whilst other *British* subjects acquire a subordinate empire in the finest provinces of *India*, which the victorious troops of *ALEXANDER* were unwilling to attack. This outline of human transactions, as far as it includes the limits of *Asia*, we can only hope to fill up, to strengthen, and to colour, by the help of *Asiatick* literature; for in history, as in law, we must not follow streams, when we may investigate foun-

tains, nor admit any secondary proof, where primary evidence is attainable: I should, nevertheless, make a bad return for your indulgent attention, were I to repeat a dry list of all the *Muselman* historians, whose works are preserved in *Arabick*, *Persian*, and *Turkish*, or expatiate on the histories and medals of *China* and *Japan*, which may in time be accessible to members of our Society, and from which alone we can expect information concerning the ancient state of the *Tartars*; but on the history of *India*, which we naturally consider as the centre of our enquiries, it may not be superfluous to present you with a few particular observations.

Our knowledge of civil *Asiatick* history (I always except that of the *Hebrews*) exhibits a short evening twilight in the venerable introduction to the first book of *MOSES*, followed by a gloomy night, in which different watches are faintly discernible, and at length we see a dawn succeeded by a sunrise more or less early according to the diversity of regions. That no *Hindu* nation, but the *Cashmirians*, have left us regular histories in their ancient language, we must ever lament; but from *Sanscrit* literature, which our country has the honour of having unveiled, we may still collect some rays of historical truth, though time and a series of revolutions have obscured that light which we might reasonably



have expected from so diligent and ingenious a people. The numerous *Puránas* and *Itibásas*, or poems mythological and heroick, are completely in our power; and from them we may recover some disfigured, but valuable, pictures of ancient manners and governments; while the popular *tales* of the *Hindus*, in prose and in verse, contain fragments of history; and even in their *dramas* we may find as many real characters and events, as a future age might find in our own plays, if all histories of *England* were, like those of *India*, to be irrecoverably lost: for example, a most beautiful poem by So'MADEVA, comprising a very long chain of instructive and agreeable stories, begins with the famed revolution at *Pátaliputra* by the murder of King NANDA, with his eight sons, and the usurpation of CHANDRAGUPTA; and the same revolution is the subject of a tragedy in *Sanscrit*, entitled the Coronation of CHANDRA, the abbreviated name of that able and adventurous usurper. From these, once concealed but now accessible, compositions, we are enabled to exhibit a more accurate sketch of old *Indian* history than the world has yet seen, especially with the aid of well-attested observations on the places of the colures. It is now clearly proved, that the first *Purána* contains an account of the deluge, between which and the *Mohammedan* conquests

the history of genuine *Hindu* government must of course be comprehended ; but we know from an arrangement of the seasons in the astronomical work of PARA'SARA, that the war of the PA'NDAVAS could not have happened earlier than the close of the twelfth century before CHRIS R, and SELEUCUS must, therefore, have reigned about nine centuries after that war : now the age of VICRAMA'DITYA is given ; and, if we can fix on an *Indian* prince, contemporary with SELEUCUS, we shall have three given points in the line of time between RAMA, or the first *Indian* colony, and CHANDRABI'JA, the last *Hindu* monarch, who reigned in *Bebár* ; so that only eight hundred or a thousand years will remain almost wholly dark ; and they must have been employed in raising empires or states, in framing laws, in improving languages and arts, and in observing the apparent motions of the celestial bodies. A *Sanscrit* history of the celebrated VICRAMA'DITYA was inspected at *Banares* by a *Pandit*, who would not have deceived me, and could not himself have been deceived ; but the owner of the book is dead and his family dispersed ; nor have my friends in that city been able, with all their exertions, to procure a copy of it : as to the *Mogul* conquests, with which modern *Indian* history begins, we have ample accounts of them in *Persian*, from

ALI of *Yezd* and the translations of *Turkish* books composed even by some of the conquerors, to GHULA'M HUSAIN, whom many of us personally know, and whose impartiality deserves the highest applause, though his unrewarded merit will give no encouragement to other contemporary historians, who, to use his own phrase in a letter to myself, may, like him, *consider plain truth as the beauty of historical composition*. From all these materials, and from these alone, a perfect history of *India* (if a mere compilation, however elegant, could deserve such a title) might be collected by any studious man, who had a competent knowledge of *Sanscrit*, *Persian*, and *Arabick*; but, even in the work of a writer so qualified, we could only give absolute credence to the general outline; for, while the abstract *sciences* are all truth, and the fine *arts* all fiction, we cannot but own, that, in the *details of history*, truth and fiction are so blended as to be scarce distinguishable.

The practical use of history, in affording particular *examples* of civil and military wisdom, has been greatly exaggerated; but *principles* of action may certainly be collected from it; and even the narrative of wars and revolutions may serve as a lesson to nations and an admonition to sovereigns: a desire, indeed, of knowing past events, while the future cannot be known, and

a view of the present gives often more pain than delight, seems natural to the human mind ; and a happy propensity would it be, if every reader of history would open his eyes to some very important corollaries, which flow from the whole extent of it. He could not but remark the constant effect of *despotism* in benumbing and debasing all those faculties, which distinguish men from the herd, that grazes ; and to that cause he would impute the decided inferiority of most *Asiatick* nations, ancient and modern, to those in *Europe*, who are blest with happier governments ; he would see the *Arabs* rising to glory, while they adhered to the free maxims of their bold ancestors, and sinking to misery from the moment, when those maxims were abandoned. On the other hand he would observe with regret, that such *republican* governments as tend to produce virtue and happiness, cannot in their nature be permanent, but are generally succeeded by *Oligarchies*, which no good man would wish to be durable. He would then, like the king of *Lydia*, remember SOLON, the wisest, bravest, and most accomplished of men, who asserts, in four nervous lines, that,  
 “ as hail and snow, which mar the labours of  
 “ husbandmen, proceed from elevated clouds, and,  
 “ as the destructive thunderbolt follows the bril-  
 “ liant flash, thus is a free state ruined by men

“ *exalted in power and splendid in wealth, while*  
 “ *the people, from gross ignorance, chuse rather*  
 “ *to become the slaves of one tyrant, that they*  
 “ *may escape from the domination of many,*  
 “ *than to preserve themselves from tyranny of*  
 “ *any kind by their union and their virtues.*”

Since, therefore, no unmixed form of government could both deserve permanence and enjoy it, and since changes even from the worst to the best, are always attended with much temporary mischief, he would fix on our *British* constitution (I mean our *publick law*, not the actual *state of things* in any given period) as the best form ever established, though we can only make distant approaches to its theoretical perfection. In these *Indian* territories, which providence has thrown into the arms of *Britain* for their protection and welfare, the religion, manners, and laws of the natives preclude even the idea of political freedom; but their histories may possibly suggest hints for their prosperity, while our country derives essential benefit from the diligence of a placid and submissive people, who multiply with such increase, even after the ravages of famine, that, in one collectorship out of *twenty-four*, and that by no means the largest or best cultivated (I mean *Crishna-nagar*) there have lately been found, by an actual enumeration, a *million and three hundred thousand*

native inhabitants; whence it should seem, that in all *India* there cannot now be fewer than *thirty millions* of black *British* subjects.

Let us proceed to *geography* and *chronology*, without which history would be no certain guide, but would resemble a kindled vapour without either a settled place or a steady light. For a reason before intimated I shall not name the various cosmographical books, which are extant in *Arabick* and *Persian*, nor give an account of those, which the *Turks* have beautifully printed in their own improved language, but shall expatiate a little on the geography and astronomy of *India*; having first observed generally, that all the *Asiatick* nations must be far better acquainted with their several countries than mere *European* scholars and travellers; that, consequently, we must learn their geography from their own writings; and that, by collating many copies of the same work, we may correct the blunders of transcribers in tables, names, and descriptions.

Geography, astronomy, and chronology have, in this part of *Asia*, shared the fate of authentick history, and, like that, have been so masked and bedecked in the fantastick robes of mythology and metaphor, that the real system of *Indian* philosophers and mathematicians can scarce be distinguished: an accurate knowledge of *Sanscrit* and a confidential intercourse with learned

*Bráhmens*, are the only means of separating truth from fable; and we may expect the most important discoveries from two of our members; concerning whom it may be safely asserted, that, if our society should have produced no other advantage than the invitation given to them for the publick display of their talents, we should have a claim to the thanks of our country and of all *Europe*. Lieutenant WILFORD has exhibited an interesting specimen of the geographical knowledge deducible from the *Puránas*, and will in time present you with so complete a treatise on the ancient world known to the *Hindus*, that the light acquired by the *Greeks* will appear but a glimmering in comparison of that, which He will diffuse; while Mr. DAVIS, who has given us a distinct idea of *Indian* computations and cycles, and ascertained the place of the colures at a time of great importance in history, will hereafter disclose the systems of *Hindu* astronomers from NA'RED and PARA'SAR to MEYA, VARA'HAMIHIR, and BHA'SCAR, and will soon, I trust, lay before you a perfect delineation of all the *Indian* asterisms in both hemispheres, where you will perceive so strong a general resemblance to the constellations of the *Greeks*, as to prove that the two systems were originally one and the same, yet with such a diversity in parts, as to show incon-

testably, that neither system was copied from the other ; whence it will follow, that they *must* have had some common source.

The jurisprudence of the *Hindus* and *Arabs* being the field, which I have chosen for my peculiar toil, you cannot expect, that I should greatly enlarge your collection of historical knowledge ; but I may be able to offer you some occasional tribute, and I cannot help mentioning a discovery, which accident threw in my way ; though my proofs must be reserved for an essay, which I have destined for the fourth volume of your Transactions. To fix the situation of that *Palibotbra* (for there may have been several of the name), which was visited and described by MEGASTHENES had always appeared a very difficult problem ; for, though it could not have been *Prayága*, where no ancient metropolis ever stood, nor *Cányacubja*, which has no epithet at all resembling the word used by the *Greeks*, nor *Gaur*, otherwise called *Lacshmanavati*, which all know to be a town comparatively modern, yet we could not confidently decide that it was *Pátaliputra*, though names and most circumstances nearly correspond, because that renowned capital extended from the confluence of the *Sone* and the *Ganges* to the site of *Patna*, while *Palibotbra* stood at the junction of the *Ganges* and *Erannoboas*, which



the accurate M. D'ANVILLE had pronounced to be the *Yamunà*: but this only difficulty was removed, when I found in a classical *Sanscrit* book, near two thousand years old, that *Hiranyabáhu*, or *golden-armed*, which the *Greeks* changed into *Erannoboas*, or the river *with a lovely murmur*, was in fact another name for the *Sóna* itself, though MEGASTHENES, from ignorance or inattention, has named them separately. This discovery led to another of greater moment; for CHANDRAGUPTA, who, from a military adventurer, became, like SANDRACOTTUS, the sovereign of upper *Hindustàn*, actually fixed the seat of his empire at *Pataliputra*, where he received ambassadors from foreign princes, and was no other than that very SANDRACOTTUS, who concluded a treaty with SELEUCUS Nicator; so that we have solved another problem, to which we before alluded, and may in round numbers consider the twelve and three hundredth years before CHRIST as two certain epochs between RA'MA, who conquered *Silán* a few centuries after the flood, and VICRAMA'DITYA, who died at *Ujjayini* fifty-seven years before the beginning of our era.

II. SINCE these discussions would lead us too far, I proceed to the history of Nature distinguished, for our present purpose, from that of Man; and divided into that of other *animals*,

who inhabit this globe, of the *mineral* substances, which it contains, and of the *vegetables*, which so luxuriantly and so beautifully adorn it.

I. Could the figure, instincts, and qualities of birds, beasts, insects, reptiles, and fish be ascertained, either on the plan of BUFFON, or on that of LINNÆUS, without giving pain to the objects of our examination, few studies would afford us more solid instruction or more exquisite delight; but I never could learn by what right, nor conceive with what feelings, a naturalist can occasion the misery of an innocent bird and leave its young, perhaps, to perish in a cold nest, because it has gay plumage and has never been accurately delineated, or deprive even a butterfly of its natural enjoyments, because it has the misfortune to be rare or beautiful; nor shall I ever forget the couplet of FIRDAUSI, for which SADI, who cites it with applause, pours blessings on his departed spirit:

Ah! spare yon emmet, rich in hoarded grain:  
He lives with pleasure, and he dies with pain.

This may be only a confession of weakness, and it certainly is not meant as a boast of peculiar sensibility; but, whatever name may be given to my opinion, it has such an effect on my conduct, that I never would suffer the *Cócila*, whose *wild native woodnotes* announce the approach of

spring, to be caught in my garden for the sake of comparing it with BUFFON's description; though I have often examined the domestick and engaging *Mayanà*, which bids us good morrow at our windows, and expects, as its reward, little more than security: even when a fine young *Manis* or *Pangolin* was brought me, against my wish, from the mountains, I solicited his restoration to his beloved rocks, because I found it impossible to preserve him in comfort at a distance from them. There are several treatises on animals in *Arabick*, and very particular accounts of them in *Chinese* with elegant outlines of their external appearance; but I have met with nothing valuable concerning them in *Persian*, except what may be gleaned from the medical dictionaries; nor have I yet seen a book in *Sanscrit*, that expressly treats of them: on the whole, though rare animals may be found in all *Asia*, yet I can only recommend an examination of them with this condition, that they be left, as much as possible, in a state of natural freedom, or made as happy as possible, if it be necessary to keep them confined.

2. The history of minerals, to which no such objection can be made, is extremely simple and easy, if we merely consider their exterior look and configuration, and their visible texture; but the analysis of their internal properties belongs

particularly to the sublime researches of Chymistry, on which we may hope to find useful disquisitions in *Sanscrit*, since the old *Hindus* unquestionably applied themselves to that enchanting study; and even from their treatises on alchymy we may possibly collect the results of actual experiment, as their ancient astrological works have preserved many valuable facts relating to the *Indian* sphere and the precession of the equinox: both in *Persian* and *Sanscrit* there are books on metals and minerals, particularly on *gems*, which the *Hindu* philosophers considered (with an exception of the diamond) as varieties of one crystalline substance either simple or compound; but we must not expect from the chymists of *Asia* those beautiful examples of analysis which have but lately been displayed in the laboratories of *Europe*.

3. We now come to *Botany*, the loveliest and most copious division in the history of nature; and, all disputes on the comparative merit of systems being at length, I hope, condemned to *one perpetual night of undisturbed slumber*, we cannot employ our leisure more delightfully, than in describing all new *Asiatick* plants in the *Linnæan* style and method, or in correcting the descriptions of those already known, but of which dry specimens only, or drawings, can have been seen by most *European* botanists: in this

part of natural history we have an ample field yet unexplored ; for, though many plants of *Arabia* have been made known by GARCIA, PROSPER ALPINUS, and FORSKOËL, of *Persia*, by GARCIN, of *Tartary*, by GMELIN and PALLAS, of *China* and *Japan*, by KÆMPFER, OSBECK, and THUNBERG, of *India*, by RHEEDE and RUMPHIUS, the two BURMANS, and the much-lamented KOENIG, yet none of those naturalists were deeply versed in the literature of the several countries, from which their vegetable treasures had been procured ; and the numerous works in *Sanſcrit* on medical substances, and chiefly on plants, have never been inspected, or never at least understood, by any *European* attached to the study of nature. Until the garden of the *India* Company shall be fully stored (as it will be, no doubt, in due time) with *Arabian*, *Persian*, and *Chinese* plants, we may well be satisfied with examining the native flowers of our own provinces ; but, unless we can discover the *Sanſcrit* names of all celebrated vegetables, we shall neither comprehend the allusions, which *Indian* poets perpetually make to them, nor (what is far worse) be able to find accounts of their tried virtues in the writings of *Indian* physicians ; and (what is worst of all) we shall miss an opportunity, which never again may present itself ; for the *Pandits* themselves have almost

wholly forgotten their ancient appellations of particular plants, and, with all my pains, I have not yet ascertained more than *two hundred*, out of twice that number, which are named in their medical or poetical compositions. It is much to be deplored, that the illustrious VAN RHEEDE had no acquaintance with *Sanscrit*, which even his three *Bråhmens*, who composed the short preface engraved in that language, appear to have understood very imperfectly, and certainly wrote with disgraceful inaccuracy; in all his twelve volumes I recollect only *Punarnavà*, in which the *Någari* letters are tolerably right; the *Hindu* words in *Arabian* characters are shamefully incorrect; and the *Malabar*, I am credibly informed, is as bad as the rest. His delineations, indeed, are in general excellent; and, though LINNÆUS himself could not extract from his written descriptions the natural character of every plant in the collection, yet we shall be able, I hope, to describe them all from the life, and to add a considerable number of new *species*, if not of new *genera*, which RHEEDE, with all his noble exertions, could never procure. Such of our learned members, as profess medicine, will, no doubt, cheerfully assist in these researches, either by their own observations, when they have leisure to make any, or by communications from other observers among their

acquaintance, who may reside in different parts of the country: and the mention of their art leads me to the various *uses* of natural substances, in the three kingdoms or classes to which they are generally reduced.

III. You cannot but have remarked, that almost all the *sciences*, as the *French* call them, which are distinguished by *Greek* names and arranged under the head of philosophy, belong for the most part to history; such are philology, chymistry, physicks, anatomy, and even metaphysicks, when we barely relate the phenomena of the human mind; for, in all branches of knowledge, we are only historians, when we announce facts, and philosophers, only when we reason on them: the same may be confidently said of law and of medicine, the first of which belongs principally to civil, and the second chiefly to natural, history. Here, therefore, I speak of *medicine*, as far only as it is grounded on experiment; and, without believing implicitly what *Arabs*, *Persians*, *Chinese*, or *Hindus* may have written on the virtues of medicinal substances, we may, surely, hope to find in their writings what our own experiments may confirm or disprove, and what might never have occurred to us without such intimations.

*Europeans* enumerate more than *two hundred and fifty* mechanical arts, by which the pro-

ductions of nature may be variously prepared for the convenience and ornament of life ; and, though the *Silpaśāstra* reduce them to *sixty-four*, yet ABU' LFAZL had been assured, that the *Hindus* reckoned *three hundred* arts and sciences : now, their sciences being comparatively few, we may conclude, that they anciently practised at least as many useful arts as ourselves. Several *Pandits* have informed me, that the treatises on art, which they call *Upavēdas* and believe to have been inspired, are not so entirely lost, but that considerable fragments of them may be found at *Banares* ; and they certainly possess many popular, but ancient, works on that interesting subject. The manufactures of sugar and indigo have been well known in these provinces for more than two thousand years ; and we cannot entertain a doubt, that their *Sanscrit* books on dying and metallurgy contain very curious facts, which might, indeed, be discovered by accident in a long course of years, but which we may soon bring to light, by the help of *Indian* literature, for the benefit of manufacturers and artists, and consequently of our nation, who are interested in their prosperity. Discoveries of the same kind might be collected from the writings of other *Asiatick* nations, especially of the *Chinese* ; but, though *Persian*, *Arabick*, *Turkish* and *Sanscrit* are languages now so accessible, that,



in order to obtain a sufficient knowledge of them, little more seems required than a strong inclination to learn them, yet the supposed number and intricacy of the *Cbinese* characters have deterred our most diligent students from attempting to find their way through so vast a labyrinth: it is certain, however, that the difficulty has been magnified beyond the truth; for the perspicuous grammar by M. FOURMONT, together with a copious dictionary, which I possess, in *Cbinese* and *Latin*, would enable any man, who pleased, to compare the original works of CONFUCIUS, which are easily procured, with the literal translation of them by COUPLET; and, having made that first step with attention, he would probably find, that he had traversed at least half of his career. But I should be led beyond the limits assigned to me on this occasion, if I were to expatiate farther on the historical division of the knowledge comprised in the literature of *Asia*; and I must postpone till next year my remarks on *Asiatick* philosophy and on those arts, which depend on imagination; promising you with confidence, that, in the course of the present year, your inquiries into the *civil and natural history* of this eastern world will be greatly promoted by the learned labours of many among our associates and correspondents,

DISCOURSE THE ELEVENTH,  
ON  
THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE ASIATICKS,

DELIVERED 20 FEBRUARY, 1794.

BY  
THE PRESIDENT.

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HAD it been of any importance, gentlemen, to arrange these anniversary dissertations according to the ordinary progress of the human mind, in the gradual expansion of its three most considerable powers, *memory, imagination, and reason*, I should certainly have presented you with an essay on the *liberal arts* of the five *Asiatick* nations, before I produced my remarks on their *abstract sciences*; because, from my own observation at least, it seems evident, that *fancy*, or the faculty of combining our ideas agreeably by various modes of imitation and substitution, is in general earlier exercised, and sooner attains maturity, than the power of separating and comparing those ideas by the laborious exertions of intellect; and hence, I believe, it has happened, that all nations in the world had poets before

they had mere philofophers; but, as M. D'ALEMBERT has deliberately placed fcience before art, as the question of precedence is, on this occafion, of no moment whatever, and as many new facts on the fubject of *Afiatick* philofophy are frefh in my remembrance, I propofe to addrefs you now on the fciences of *Afia*, referving for our next annual meeting a difquifition concerning thofe fine arts, which have immemorially been cultivated, with different fuccefs and in very different modes, within the circle of our common inquiries.

By fcience I mean an affemblage of tranfcendental propofitions difcoverable by human reafon, and reducible to firft principles, axioms, or maxims, from which they may all be derived in a regular fucceffion; and there are confequently as many fciences as there are general objects of our intellectual powers: when man firft exerts thofe powers, his objects are *himfelf* and the reft of *nature*; himfelf he perceives to be compofed of *body* and *mind*, and in his *individual* capacity, he reafons on the *ufes* of his animal frame and of its parts both exteriour and internal, on the *diforders* impeding the regular functions of thofe parts, and on the moft probable methods of preventing thofe diforders or of removing them; he foon feels the clofe connexion between his corporeal and mental faculties, and when

his *mind* is reflected on itself, he discourses on its *essence* and its *operations*; in his *social* character, he analyzes his various *duties* and *rights* both private and publick; and in the leisure, which the fullest discharge of those duties always admits, his intellect is directed to *nature* at large, to the *substance* of natural bodies, to their several *properties*, and to their quantity both separate and united, finite and infinite; from all which objects he deduces notions, either purely abstract and universal, or mixed with undoubted facts, he argues from phenomena to theorems, from those theorems to other phenomena, from causes to effects, from effects to causes, and thus arrives at the demonstration of a *first intelligent cause*; whence his collected wisdom, being arranged in the form of science, chiefly consists of *physiology* and *medicine*, *metaphysics* and *logick*, *ethicks* and *jurisprudence*, *natural philosophy* and *mathematicks*; from which the *religion of nature* (since revealed religion must be referred to *history*, as alone affording evidence of it) has in all ages and in all nations been the sublime and consoling result. Without professing to have given a logical definition of science, or to have exhibited a perfect enumeration of its objects, I shall confine myself to those *five* divisions of *Asiatick* philosophy, enlarging for the most part on the progress which the *Hindus* have made in

them, and occasionally introducing the sciences of the *Arabs* and *Persians*, the *Tartars*, and the *Chinese*; but, how extensive soever may be the range which I have chosen, I shall beware of exhausting your patience with tedious discussions, and of exceeding those limits, which the occasion of our present meeting has necessarily prescribed.

I. THE first article affords little scope; since I have no evidence, that, in any language of *Asia*, there exists one original treatise on medicine considered as a *science*: physick, indeed, appears in these regions to have been from time immemorial, as we see it practised at this day by *Hindus* and *Muselmans*, a mere empirical *history* of diseases and remedies; useful, I admit, in a high degree, and worthy of attentive examination, but wholly foreign to the subject before us: though the *Arabs*, however, have chiefly followed the *Greeks* in this branch of knowledge, and have themselves been implicitly followed by other *Mohammedan* writers, yet (not to mention the *Chinese*, of whose medical works I can at present say nothing with confidence) we still have access to a number of *Sanscrit* books on the old *Indian* practice of physick, from which, if the *Hindus* had a theoretical system, we might easily collect it. The *Ayurvêda*, supposed to be the work of a celestial

physician, is almost entirely lost, unfortunately perhaps for the curious *European*, but happily for the patient *Hindu*; since a revealed science precludes improvement from experience, to which that of medicine ought, above all others, to be left perpetually open; but I have myself met with curious fragments of that primeval work, and, in the *Vêda* itself, I found with astonishment an entire *Upanishad* on the internal parts of the human body; with an enumeration of nerves, veins, and arteries, a description of the heart, spleen, and liver, and various disquisitions on the formation and growth of the fetus: from the laws, indeed, of MENU, which have lately appeared in our own language, we may perceive, that the ancient *Hindus* were fond of reasoning in their way on the mysteries of animal generation, and on the comparative influence of the sexes in the production of perfect offspring; and we may collect from the authorities adduced in the learned Essay on *Egypt* and the *Nile*, that their physiological disputes led to violent schisms in religion, and even to bloody wars. On the whole, we cannot expect to acquire many valuable truths from an examination of eastern books on the science of medicine; but examine them we must, if we wish to complete the history of universal philosophy, and to sup-

ply the scholars of *Europe* with authentick materials for an account of the opinions anciently formed on this head by the philosophers of *Asia*: to know, indeed, with certainty, that so much and no more can be known on any branch of science, would in itself be very important and useful knowledge, if it had no other effect than to check the boundless curiosity of mankind, and to fix them in the straight path of attainable science, especially of such as relates to their duties and may conduce to their happiness.

II. WE have an ample field in the next division, and a field almost wholly new; since the metaphysics and logick of the *Bráhmens*, comprised in their *six* philosophical *Sástras*, and explained by numerous glosses or comments, have never yet been accessible to *Europeans*; and, by the help of the *Sanscrit* language, we now may read the works of the *Saugatas*, *Bauidbas*, *Arbatas*, *Jainas*, and other heterodox philosophers, whence we may gather the metaphysical tenets prevalent in *China* and *Japan*, in the eastern peninsula of *India*, and in many considerable nations of *Tartary*: there are also some valuable tracts on these branches of science in *Persian* and *Arabick*, partly copied from the *Greeks*, and partly comprising the doctrines of the *Súfis* which anciently prevailed, and still

prevail in great measure over this oriental world, and which the *Greeks* themselves condescended to borrow from eastern sages.

The little treatise in four chapters, ascribed to *Vyása*, is the only philosophical *Sástra*, the original text of which I have had leisure to peruse with a *Bráhmen* of the *Védánti* school: it is extremely obscure, and, though composed in sentences elegantly modulated, has more resemblance to a table of contents, or an accurate summary, than to a regular systematical tract; but all its obscurity has been cleared by the labour of the very judicious and most learned SANCARA, whose commentary on the *Védánta*, which I read also with great attention, not only elucidates every word of the text, but exhibits a perspicuous account of all other *Indian* schools, from that of CAPILA to those of the more modern hereticks. It is not possible, indeed, to speak with too much applause of so excellent a work; and I am confident in asserting, that, until an accurate translation of it shall appear in some *European* language, the general history of philosophy must remain incomplete; for I perfectly agree with those, who are of opinion, that one correct version of any celebrated *Hindu* book would be of greater value than all the dissertations or essays, that could be composed on the same subject; you will not, however, ex-



peñt, that, in fuch a difcourfe as I am now delivering, I fhould expatiate on the diverfity of *Indian* philofophical fchools, on the feveral founders of them, on the doñtrines, which they refpectively taught, or on their many difciples, who diffented from their instructors in fome particular points. On the prefent occafion, it will be fufficient to fay, that the oldeft head of a feñt, whofe entire work is preferved, was (according to fome authors) *CAPILA*; not the divine perfonage, a reputed grandfon of *BRAHMA*, to whom *CRIŒHNA* compares himfelf in the *Gita*, but a fage of his name, who invented the *Sanc'bya*, or *Numeral*, philofophy, which *CRIŒHNA* himfelf appears to impugn in his converfation with *ARJUNA*, and which, as far as I can recollect it from a few original texts, refembled in part the metaphyficks of *PYTHAGORAS*, and in part the theology of *ZENO*: his doñtrines were enforced and illuftrated, with fome additions, by the venerable *PATANJALI*, who has alfo left us a fine comment on the grammatical rules of *PA'NINI*, which are more obfcure, without a glofs, than the darkeft oracle: and here by the way let me add, that I refer to metaphyficks the curious and important fcience of *universal grammar*, on which many fubtil difquifitions may be found interſperfed in the particular grammars of the ancient *Hindus*, and in

those of the more modern *Arabs*. The next founder, I believe, of a philosophical school was GÓTAMA, if, indeed, he was not the most ancient of all; for his wife AHALY'A was, according to *Indian* legends, restored to a human shape by the great RA'MA; and a sage of his name, whom we have no reason to suppose a different personage, is frequently mentioned in the *Véda* itself; to his rational doctrines those of CANA'DA were in general conformable; and the philosophy of them both is usually called *Nyáya*, or *logical*, a title aptly bestowed; for it seems to be a system of metaphysics and logick better accommodated than any other anciently known in *India*, to the natural reason and common sense of mankind; admitting the actual existence of *material substance* in the popular acceptation of the word *matter*, and comprising not only a body of sublime dialecticks, but an artificial method of reasoning, with distinct names for the three parts of a proposition, and even for those of a regular syllogism. Here I cannot refrain from introducing a singular tradition, which prevailed, according to the well-informed author of the *Dabistán*, in the *Panjáb* and in several *Persian* provinces, that, "among other *Indian* curiosities, which CALLISTHENES transmitted to his uncle, was a *technical system of logick*, which the *Bráhmens* had communicated

“ to the inquisitive *Greek*,” and which the *Mohammedan* writer supposes to have been the groundwork of the famous *Aristotelean* method : if this be true, it is one of the most interesting facts, that I have met with in *Asia* ; and if it be false, it is very extraordinary, that such a story should have been fabricated either by the candid *MOHSANI Fání* ; or by the simple *Pársis Pandits*, with whom he had conversed ; but, not having had leisure to study the *Nyáya Sástra*, I can only assure you, that I have frequently seen perfect syllogisms in the philosophical writings of the *Bráhmens*, and have often heard them used in their verbal controversies. Whatever might have been the merit or age of *GO-TAMA*, yet the most celebrated *Indian* school is that, with which I began, founded by *VYA'SA*, and supported in most respects by his pupil *JAIMINI*, whose dissent on a few points is mentioned by his master with respectful moderation : their several systems are frequently distinguished by the names of the first and second *Mimánsá*, a word, which, like *Nyáya*, denotes the operations and conclusions of reason ; but the tract of *VYA'SA* has in general the appellation of *Védánta*, or the scope and end of the *Véda*, on the texts of which, as they were understood by the philosopher, who collected them, his doctrines are principally grounded. The fundamental tenet

of the *Védānti* school, to which in a more modern age the incomparable SANCARA was a firm and illustrious adherent, consisted, not in denying the existence of matter, that is, of solidity, impenetrability, and extended figure (to deny which would be lunacy), but, in correcting the popular notion of it, and in contending, that it has no essence independent of mental perception, that existence and perceptibility are convertible terms, that external appearances and sensations are illusory, and would vanish into nothing, if the divine energy, which alone sustains them, were suspended but for a moment; an opinion, which EPICHRMUS and PLATO seem to have adopted, and which has been maintained in the present century with great elegance, but with little publick applause; partly because it has been misunderstood, and partly because it has been misapplied by the false reasoning of some unpopular writers, who are said to have disbelieved in the moral attributes of God, whose omnipresence, wisdom, and goodness are the basis of the *Indian* philosophy: I have not sufficient evidence on the subject to profess a belief in the doctrine of the *Védānta*, which human reason alone could, perhaps, neither fully demonstrate, nor fully disprove; but it is manifest, that nothing can be farther removed from impiety than a system wholly built on the purest

devotion ; and the inexpressible difficulty, which any man, who shall make the attempt, will assuredly find in giving a satisfactory definition of *material substance*, must induce us to deliberate with coolness, before we censure the learned and pious reposer of the ancient *Véda* ; though we cannot but admit, that, if the common opinions of mankind be the criterion of philosophical truth, we must adhere to the system of GO'TAMA, which the *Bráhmens* of this province almost universally follow.

If the metaphysics of the *Védántis* be wild and erroneous, the pupils of BUDDHA have run, it is asserted, into an error diametrically opposite ; for they are charged with denying the existence of pure spirit, and with believing nothing absolutely and really to exist but *material substance* ; a heavy accusation which ought only to have been made on positive and incontestable proof, especially by the orthodox *Bráhmens*, who, as BUDDHA dissented from their ancestors in regard to *bloody sacrifices*, which the *Véda* certainly prescribes, may not unjustly be suspected of low and interested malignity. Though I cannot credit the charge, yet I am unable to prove it entirely false, having only read a few pages of a *Saugata* book, which Captain KIRKPATRICK had lately the kindness to give me ; but it begins, like other *Hindbooks*, with the

word *O'm*, which we know to be a symbol of the divine attributes: then follows, indeed, a mysterious hymn to the Goddess of Nature, by the name of *Aryá*, but with several other titles, which the *Brábmens* themselves continually bestow on their *Dévi*; now the *Brábmens*, who have no idea, that any such personage exists as *DEVI*, or the Goddess, and only mean to express allegorically the power of GOD, exerted in creating, preserving and renovating this universe, we cannot with justice infer, that the dissenters admit no deity but *visible nature*: the *Pandit*, who now attends me, and who told Mr. WILKINS, that the *Saugatas* were atheists, would not have attempted to resist the decisive evidence of the contrary, which appears in the very instrument, on which he was consulted, if his understanding had not been blinded by the intolerant zeal of a mercenary priesthood. A literal version of the book just mentioned (if any studious man had learning and industry equal to the task) would be an inestimable treasure to the compiler of such a history as that of the laborious BRUCKER; but let us proceed to the *morals* and *jurisprudence* of the *Asiaticks*, on which I could expatiate, if the occasion admitted a full discussion of the subject, with correctness and confidence.

III. THAT both ethicks and abstract law

might be reduced to the *method of science*, cannot surely be doubted; but, although such a method would be of infinite use in a system of universal, or even of national, jurisprudence, yet the *principles* of morality are so few, so luminous, and so ready to present themselves on every occasion, that the practical utility of a scientific arrangement, in a treatise on ethicks, may very justly be questioned. (The moralists of the east have in general chosen to deliver their precepts in short sententious maxims, to illustrate them by sprightly comparisons, or to inculcate them in the very ancient form of agreeable apologues: there are, indeed, both in *Arabick* and *Persian*, philosophical tracts on ethicks written with sound ratiocination and elegant perspicuity: but in every part of this eastern world, from *Pekin* to *Damascus*, the popular teachers of moral wisdom have immemorially been poets, and there would be no end of enumerating their works, which are still extant in the five principal languages of *Asia*. Our divine religion, the truth of which (if any history be true) is abundantly proved by historical evidence, has no need of such aids, as many are willing to give it, by asserting, that the wisest men of this world were ignorant of the two great maxims that *we must act in respect of others, as we should wish them to act in respect of our-*

*selves, and that, instead of returning evil for evil, we should confer benefits even on those who injure us; but the first rule is implied in a speech of LYSIAS, and expressed in distinct phrases by THALES and PITTACUS; and I have even seen it word for word in the original of CONFUCIUS, which I carefully compared with the Latin translation. It has been usual with zealous men, to ridicule and abuse all those, who dare on this point to quote the Chinese philosopher; but, instead of supporting their cause, they would shake it, if it could be shaken, by their uncandid asperity; for they ought to remember, that one great end of revelation, as it is most expressly declared, was not to instruct the wise and few, but the many and unenlightened. If the conversion, therefore, of the Pandits and Maulavis in this country shall ever be attempted by protestant missionaries, they must beware of asserting, while they teach the gospel of truth, what those Pandits and Maulavis would know to be false: the former would cite the beautiful Arya couplet, which was written at least three centuries before our era, and which pronounces the duty of a good man, even in the moment of his destruction, to consist not only in forgiving, but even in a desire of benefiting, his destroyer, as the Sandal-tree, in the instant of its overthrow, sheds perfume on the axe, which fells it; and the latter*



would triumph in repeating the verse of SADI, who represents *a return of good for good as a slight reciprocity*, but says to the virtuous man, “*Confer benefits on him who has injured thee,*” using an *Arabick* sentence, and a maxim apparently of the ancient *Arabs*. Nor would the *Muselmans* fail to recite four distichs of HA’FIZ, who has illustrated that maxim with fanciful but elegant allusions ;

Learn from yon orient shell to love thy foe,  
 And store with pearls the hand, that brings thee wo ;  
 Free, like yon rock, from base vindictive pride,  
 Imblaze with gems the wrist, that rends thy side :  
 Mark, where yon tree rewards the stony show’r  
 With fruit nectareous, or the balmy flow’r ;  
 All nature calls aloud : “ Shall man do less  
 Than heal the smiter, and the railer blefs ?”

Now there is not a shadow of reason for believing, that the poet of *Sbirax* had borrowed this doctrine from the *Christians* ; but, as the cause of *Christianity* could never be promoted by falsehood or error, so it will never be obstructed by candour and veracity ; for the lessons of CONFUCIUS and CHANACYA, of SADI and HA’FIZ, are unknown even at this day to millions of *Chinese* and *Hindus*, *Persians* and other *Mahomedans*, who toil for their daily support ; nor, were they known ever so perfectly, would they have a divine sanction with the multitude ;

ſo that, in order to enlighten the minds of the ignorant, and to enforce the obedience of the perverſe, it is evidently *a priori*, that a revealed religion was neceſſary in the great ſyſtem of providence; but my principal motive for introducing this topick, was to give you a ſpecimen of that ancient oriental morality, which is comprized in an infinite number of *Persian*, *Arabick*, and *Sanſcrit* compositions.

Nearly one half of *jurisprudence* is cloſely connected with ethicks; but, ſince the learned of *Aſia* conſider moſt of their laws as poſitive and divine inſtitutions, and not as the mere concluſions of human reaſon, and ſince I have prepared a maſs of extremely curious materials, which I reſerve for an introduction to the digeſt of *Indian* laws, I proceed to the fourth diviſion, which conſiſts principally of *ſcience* tranſcendently ſo named, or *the knowledge of abſtract quantities, of their limits, properties and relations*, impreſſed on the underſtanding with the force of irrefiſtible *demonſtration*, which, as all other knowledge depends at beſt on our fallible ſenſes, and in great meaſure on ſtill more fallible teſtimony, can only be found, in pure mental abſtractions; though for all the purpoſes of life, our own ſenſes, and even the credible teſtimony of others, give us in moſt caſes the higheſt degree of certainty, phyſical and moral.

IV. I HAVE already had occasion to touch on the *Indian* metaphysics of *natural bodies* according to the most celebrated of the *Asiatick* schools, from which the *Pythagoreans* are supposed to have borrowed many of their opinions; and, as we learn from *CICERO*, that the old sages of *Europe* had an idea of *centripetal force* and a principle of *universal gravitation* (which they never indeed attempted to demonstrate), so I can venture to affirm, without meaning to pluck a leaf from the neverfading laurels of our immortal *NEWTON*; that the whole of his theology and part of his philosophy may be found in the *Védas* and even in the works of the *Sûfis*: that *most subtil spirit*, which he suspected to pervade natural bodies, and, lying concealed in them, to cause attraction and repulsion, the emission, reflection, and refraction of light, electricity, calcification, sensation, and muscular motion, is described by the *Hindus* as a *fifth element* endued with those very powers; and the *Védas* abound with allusions to a force universally attractive, which they chiefly ascribe to the Sun, thence called *Aditya*, or the *Attractor*; a name designed by the mythologists to mean the child of the Goddess *ADITI*; but the most wonderful passage on the theory of attraction occurs in the charming allegorical poem of *SHIR'IN* and *FERHA'D*, or the *Divine Spirit* and a human

*Soul disinterestedly pious*; a work which from the first verse to the last, is a blaze of religious and poetical fire. The whole passage appears to me so curious, that I make no apology for giving you a faithful translation of it: “ There  
 “ is a strong propensity, which dances through  
 “ every atom, and attracts the minutest particle  
 “ to some peculiar object; search this universe  
 “ from its base to its summit, from fire to air,  
 “ from water to earth, from all below the Moon  
 “ to all above the celestial spheres, and thou  
 “ wilt not find a corpuscle destitute of that na-  
 “ tural attractibility; the very point of the first  
 “ thread, in this apparently tangled skein, is no  
 “ other than such a principle of attraction, and  
 “ all principles beside are void of a real basis;  
 “ from such a propensity arises every motion  
 “ perceived in heavenly or in terrestrial bodies;  
 “ it is a disposition to be attracted, which taught  
 “ hard steel to rush from its place and rivet itself  
 “ on the magnet; it is the same disposition,  
 “ which impels the light straw to attach itself  
 “ firmly on amber; it is this quality, which gives  
 “ every substance in nature a tendency toward  
 “ another, and an inclination forcibly directed  
 “ to a determinate point.” These notions are vague, indeed, and unsatisfactory; but permit me to ask, whether the last paragraph of NEWTON’S incomparable work goes much farther,

and whether any subsequent experiments have thrown light on a subject so abstruse and obscure: that the sublime astronomy and exquisitely beautiful geometry, with which that work is illumined, should in any degree be approached by the Mathematicians of *Asia*, while of all *Europeans*, who ever lived, ARCHIMEDES alone was capable of emulating them, would be a vain expectation; but we must suspend our opinion of *Indian* astronomical knowledge, till the *Súrya Siddhánta* shall appear in our own language, and even then (to adopt a phrase of CICERO) our *greedy and capacious ears* will by no means be satisfied; for in order to complete an historical account of genuine *Hindu* astronomy, we require verbal translations of at least three other *Sanscrit* books; of the treatise by PARASARA, for the first age of *Indian* science, of that by VARA'HA, with the copious comment of his very learned son, for the middle age, and of those written by BHASCARA, for times comparatively modern. The valuable and now accessible works of the last mentioned philosopher, contain also an *universal*, or *specious*, arithmetick, with one chapter at least on geometry; nor would it, surely, be difficult to procure, through our several residents with the *Pishwá* and with SCINDHYA, the older books on algebra, which BHASCARA mentions, and on which Mr. DAVIS would justly set a

very high value ; but the *Sanſcrit* work, from which we might expect the moſt ample and important information, is entitled *Cſbêtrâderſa*, or *a View of Geometrical Knowledge*, and was compiled in a very large volume by order of the illuſtrious JAYASINHA, comprising all that remains on that ſcience in the ſacred language of *India* : it was inſpected in the weſt by a *Pandit* now in the ſervice of Lieutenant WILFORD, and might, I am perſuaded, be purchaſed at *Jayanagar*, where Colonel POLIER had permiſſion from the *Rájá* to buy the four *Vêdas* themſelves. THUS have I answered, to the beſt of my power, the three firſt queſtions obligingly tranſmitted to us by profeſſor PLAYFAIR ; whether the *Hindus* have books in *Sanſcrit* expreſſly on geometry, whether they have any ſuch on arithmetick, and whether a tranſlation of the *Sûrya ſiddhânta* be not the great *deſideratum* on the ſubject of *Indian* aſtronomy : to his three laſt queſtions, whether an accurate ſummary account of all the *Sanſcrit* works on that ſubject, a delineation of the *Indian* celeftial ſphere, with correſt remarks on it, and a deſcription of the aſtronomical inſtruments uſed by the ancient *Hindus*, would not ſeverally be of great utility, we cannot but answer in the affirmative, provided that the utmoſt critical ſagacity were applied in diſtinguiſhing ſuch works, conſtellations,

and instruments, as are clearly of *Indian* origin, from such as were introduced into this country by *Muselman* astronomers from *Tartary* and *Persia*, or in later days by Mathematicians from *Europe*.

V. FROM all the properties of man and of nature, from all the various branches of science, from all the deductions of human reason, the general corollary, admitted by *Hindus*, *Arabs*, and *Tartars*, by *Persians*, and by *Chinese*, is the supremacy of an all-creating and all-preserving spirit, infinitely wise, good, and powerful, but infinitely removed from the comprehension of his most exalted creatures; nor are there in any language (the ancient *Hebrew* always excepted) more pious and sublime addresses to the being of beings, more splendid enumerations of his attributes, or more beautiful descriptions of his visible works, than in *Arabick*, *Persian* and *Sanscrit*, especially in the *Koran*, the introductions to the poems of SADI', NIZA'M'I, and FIRDAUS'I, the four *Védas* and many parts of the numerous *Puránas*: but supplication and praise would not satisfy the boundless imagination of the *Vedánti* and *Súfi* theologians, who blending uncertain metaphysics with undoubted principles of religion, have presumed to reason confidently on the very nature and essence of the divine spirit, and asserted in a very remote age, what multitudes of

*Hindus* and *Muselmans* assert at this hour, that all spirit is homogeneous, that the spirit of God is in *kind* the same with that of man, though differing from it infinitely in *degree*, and that, as material substance is mere illusion, there exists in this universe only one generick spiritual substance, the sole primary cause, efficient, substantial and formal of all secondary causes and of all appearances whatever, but endued in its highest degree, with a sublime providential wisdom, and proceeding by ways incomprehensible to the spirits which emanate from it; an opinion, which GŌTAMA never taught, and which we have no authority to believe, but which, as it is grounded on the doctrine of an immaterial creator supremely wise, and a constant preserver supremely benevolent, differs as widely from the pantheism of SPINOZA and TOLAND, as the affirmation of a proposition differs from the negation of it; though the last named professor of that *insane philosophy* had the baseness to conceal his meaning under the very words of Saint PAUL, which are cited by NEWTON for a purpose totally different, and has even used a phrase, which occurs, indeed, in the *Vēda*, but in a sense diametrically opposite to that, which he would have given it. The passage, to which I allude, is in a speech of VARUNA to his son, where he says: "That spirit, from which these created



“ beings proceed; through which having proceeded from it, they live; toward which they tend and in which they are ultimately absorbed, that spirit study to know; that spirit is the Great One.”

The subject of this discourse, gentlemen, is inexhaustible: it has been my endeavour to say as much on it as possible in the fewest words; and, at the beginning of next year, I hope to close these general disquisitions with topics measureless in extent, but less abstruse than that, which has this day been discussed, and better adapted to the gaiety, which seems to have prevailed in the learned banquets of the *Greeks*, and which ought, surely, to prevail in every symposiack assembly.



*The System of*

# INDIAN, ARABIAN & PERSIAN LETTERS.

## *Soft and hard Breathings*

	a or e	ha	hha	
<i>Vowels</i>	<i>Diphthongs</i>	<i>and</i>		<i>Semivowels</i>
ã.ā.	a, à	e	è	ya
i	ì	o	ò	wa
u	ù	a i	a u	ra
r ĩ	r ī	lr ĩ	lr ī	la
â â	ê è	î ì	û ù	á â

### *Consonants.*

ca	c'ha	ga	g'ha	na
ka	kha		gha	
sa	sha	za	zha	śa
t a	t'ha	d a	{ d'ha }	ñ a
	}		{ dha }	
t a	{ t'ha }	d a	{ d'ha }	n a
	{ tha }		{ dha }	
p a	{ p'ha }	b a	{ b'ha }	m a
	{ fa }		{ va }	

### *Compounds.*

cha	ch,ha	ja	jha	nya
za	ẓa	ẓa	csha	jnya

A DISSERTATION  
ON THE  
ORTHOGRAPHY OF ASIATICK WORDS  
IN ROMAN LETTERS.

BY  
THE PRESIDENT.

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EVERY man, who has occasion to compose tracts on *Asiatick* Literature, or to translate from the *Asiatick* Languages, must always find it convenient, and sometimes necessary, to express *Arabian*, *Indian*, and *Persian* words, or sentences, in the characters generally used among *Europeans*; and almost every writer in those circumstances has a method of notation peculiar to himself; but none has yet appeared in the form of a complete system; so that each original found may be rendered invariably by one appropriated symbol, conformably to the natural order of articulation, and with a due regard to the primitive power of the *Roman* alphabet, which modern *Europe* has in general adopted. A want of attention to this object has occasioned great confusion in History and Geography. The

ancient *Greeks*, who made a voluntary sacrifice of truth to the delicacy of their ears, appear to have altered by design almost all the oriental names, which they introduced into their elegant, but romantick, Histories; and even their more modern Geographers, who were too vain, perhaps, of their own language to learn any other, have so strangely disguised the proper appellations of countries, cities, and rivers in *Asia*, that, without the guidance of the sagacious and indefatigable M. D'ANVILLE, it would have been as troublesome to follow ALEXANDER through the *Panjâb* on the Ptolemaick map of AGATHODÆMON, as actually to travel over the same country in its present state of rudeness and disorder. They had an unwarrantable habit of moulding foreign names to a *Grecian* form, and giving them a resemblance to some derivative word in their own tongue: thus, they changed the *Gogra* into *Agoranis*, or *a river of the assembly*, *Ucbab* into *Oxydracæ*, or *sharp-sighted*, and *Renas* into *Aornos*, or *a rock inaccessible to birds*; whence their poets, who delighted in wonders, embellished their works with new images, distinguishing regions and fortresses by properties, which existed only in imagination. If we have less liveliness of fancy than the Ancients, we have more accuracy, more love of truth, and; perhaps, more solidity of judgement; and, if our

works shall afford less delight to those, in respect of whom we shall be Ancients, it may be said without presumption, that we shall give them more correct information on the History and Geography of this eastern world; since no man can perfectly describe a country, who is unacquainted with the language of it. The learned and entertaining work of M. D'HERBELOT, which professes to interpret and elucidate the names of persons and places, and the titles of books, abounds also in citations from the best writers of *Arabia* and *Persia*; yet, though his orthography will be found less defective than that of other writers on similar subjects, without excepting the illustrious Prince KANFEMIR, still it requires more than a moderate knowledge of *Persian*, *Arabick*, and *Turkish*, to comprehend all the passages quoted by him in *European* characters; one instance of which I cannot forbear giving. In the account of *Ibnu Zaidun*, a celebrated *Andalusian* poet, the first couplet of an elegy in *Arabick* is praised for its elegance, and expressed thus in *Roman* letters:

Iekad hein tenagikom dhamairna;

Iadha alaina alaffa laula taffina.

“ The time, adds the translator, will soon  
 “ come, when you will deliver us from all our  
 “ cares: the remedy is assured, provided we

“ have a little patience.” When Dr. HUNT of *Oxford*, whom I am bound to name with gratitude and veneration, together with two or three others, attempted at my request to write the same distich in *Arabian* characters, they all wrote it differently, and all, in my present opinion, erroneously. I was then a very young student, and could not easily have procured *Ibnu Zaidun's* works, which are, no doubt, preserved in the *Bodley* library, but which have not since fallen in my way. This admired couplet, therefore, I have never seen in the original characters, and confess myself at a loss to render them with certainty. Both verses are written by *D'Herbelot* without attention to the grammatical points, that is, in a form which no learned *Arab* would give them in recitation; but, although the *French* version be palpably erroneous, it is by no means easy to correct the error. If *alásà* or a *remedy* be the true reading, the negative particle must be absurd, since *taáfsalnà* signifies *we are patient*, and not *we despair*, but, if *alásay* or *affliction* be the proper word, some obscurity must arise from the verb, with which it agrees. On the whole I guess, that the distich should thus be written :

يَكَاةٌ حِينَ تَنَاجِيكُمْ صَهِيرُنَا  
يَقْضِي عَلَيْنَا الْإِسَى لَوْلَا تَأْسِينَا

*Yecádu bbina tunájicum d'emáirundè*  
*Takdi áláinà 'láfay lau là taáfstná.*

“When our bosoms impart their secrets to  
 “you, anguish would almost fix our doom, if  
 “we were not mutually to console ourselves.”

The principal verbs may have a future sense, and the last word may admit of a different interpretation. Dr. HUNT, I remember, had found in GIGGÆIUS the word *dbemáyer*, which he conceived to be in the original. After all, the rhyme seems imperfect, and the measure irregular. Now I ask, whether such perplexities could have arisen, if *D'Herbelot* or his Editor had formed a regular system of expressing *Arabick* in *Roman* characters, and had apprized his readers of it in his introductory dissertation?

If a further proof be required, that such a system will be useful to the learned and essential to the student, let me remark, that a learner of *Persian*, who should read in our best histories the life of Sultan AZIM, and wish to write his name in *Arabick* letters, might express it *thirty-nine* different ways, and be wrong at last: the word should be written *Aázem* with three points on the first consonant.

There are two general modes of exhibiting *Asiatick* words in our own letters: they are founded on principles nearly opposite, but each



of them has its advantages, and each has been recommended by respectable authorities. The first professes to regard chiefly the *pronunciation* of the words intended to be expressed; and this method, as far as it can be pursued, is unquestionably useful: but new sounds are very inadequately presented to a sense not formed to receive them; and the reader must in the end be left to pronounce many letters and syllables precariously; besides, that by this mode of orthography all grammatical analogy is destroyed, simple sounds are represented by double characters, vowels of one denomination stand for those of another; and possibly with all our labour we perpetuate a provincial or inelegant pronunciation: all these objections may be made to the usual way of writing *Kummerbund*, in which neither the letters nor the true sound of them are preserved, while *Kemberbend*, or *Cemberbend*, as an ancient *Briton* would write it, clearly exhibits both the original characters and the *Persian* pronunciation of them. To set this point in a strong light, we need only suppose, that the *French* had adopted a system of letters wholly different from ours, and of which we had no types in our printing-houses: let us conceive an *Englishman* acquainted with their language to be pleased with *MALHERBE*'s well-known imitation of *Horace*, and desirous of

quoting it in some piece of criticism. He would read thus,

- ‘ La mort a des rigueurs à nulle autre pareilles,
- ‘ On a beau la prier :
- ‘ La cruelle qu’elle est se bouche les oreilles,
- ‘ Et nous laisse crier.
- ‘ Le pauvre en sa cabane, ou le chaume le couvre,
- ‘ Est sujet à ses loix,
- ‘ Et la garde, qui veille aux barrières du *Louvre*,
- ‘ N’en défend pas nos rois !’

Would he then express these eight verses, in *Roman* characters, exactly as the *French* themselves in fact express them, or would he decorate his composition with a passage more resembling the dialect of savages, than that of a polished nation? His pronunciation, good or bad, would, perhaps, be thus represented :

- ‘ Law more aw day reegyewrs aw nool otruh parellyuh,
- ‘ Onne aw bo law preeay :
- ‘ Law crooellyuh kellay fuh booshuh lays oreellyuh,
- ‘ Ay-noo layfuh creeay.
- ‘ Luh povre ong faw cawbawn oo luh chomuh luh coovruh,
- ‘ Ay foozyet aw fay lwaw,
- ‘ Ay law gawrduh kee velly ò bawryayruh dyoo *Looovruh*
- ‘ Nong dayfong paw no rwaw !’

The second system of *Asiatick* Orthography consists in scrupulously rendering letter for letter,

without any particular care to preserve the pronunciation ; and, as long as this mode proceeds by unvaried rules, it seems clearly entitled to preference.

For the first method of writing *Persian* words the warmest advocate, among my acquaintance, was the late Major DAVY, a Member of our Society, and a man of parts, whom the world lost prematurely at a time, when he was meditating a literary retirement, and hoping to pass the remainder of his life in domestick happiness, and in the cultivation of his very useful talents. He valued himself particularly on his pronunciation of the *Persian* language, and on his new way of exhibiting it in our characters, which he instructed the learned and amiable Editor of his *Institutes of Timour at Oxford* to retain with minute attention throughout his work. Where he had acquired his refined articulation of the *Persian*, I never was informed ; but it is evident, that he spells most proper names in a manner, which a native of *Persia*, who could read our letters, would be unable to comprehend. For instance : that the capital of *Azarbáiján* is now called *Tabriz*, I know from the mouth of a person born in that city, as well as from other *Iranians* ; and that it was so called sixteen hundred years ago, we all know from the *Geography of Ptolemy* ; yet Major DAVY always wrote it

*Tubburaze*, and insisted that it should thus be pronounced. Whether the natives of *Semer-kand*, or *Samarkand*, who probably speak the dialect of *Soghd* with a *Turanian* pronunciation, call their birthplace, as DAVY spelled it, *Summurkund*, I have yet to learn; but I cannot believe it, and am convinced, that the former mode of writing the word expresses both the letters and the sound of them better than any other combination of characters. His method, therefore, has every defect; since it renders neither the original elements of words, nor the sounds represented by them in *Persia*, where alone we must seek for genuine *Persian*, as for *French* in *France*, and for *Italian* in *Italy*.

The second method has found two able supporters in Mr. HALHED and Mr. WILKINS; to the first of whom the publick is indebted for a perspicuous and ample grammar of the *Bengal* language, and to the second for more advantages in *Indian* literature than *Europe*, or *India*, can ever sufficiently acknowledge.

Mr. HALHED, having justly remarked, ‘ that  
 ‘ the two greatest defects in the orthography of  
 ‘ any language are the application of the same  
 ‘ letter to several different sounds, and of different  
 ‘ letters to the same sound,’ truly pronounces them  
 both to be ‘ so common in *English*, that he was  
 ‘ exceedingly embarrassed in the choice of letters

‘ to express the found of the *Bengal* vowels, and  
 ‘ was at last by no means satisfied with his own  
 ‘ selection.’ If any thing dissatisfies me, in his  
 clear and accurate system, it is the use of *double*  
 letters for the long vowels (which might how-  
 ever be justified) and the frequent intermixture  
 of *Italick* with *Roman* letters in the same word ;  
 which both in writing and printing must be  
 very inconvenient: perhaps it may be added,  
 that his diphthongs are not expressed analogously  
 to the sounds, of which they are composed.

The system of Mr. WILKINS has been equally  
 well considered, and Mr. HALHED himself has  
 indeed adopted it in his preface to the *Compila-  
 tion of Hindu Laws*: it principally consists of  
 double letters to signify our third and fifth  
 vowels, and of the common prosodial marks to  
 ascertain their brevity or their length; but those  
 marks are so generally appropriated to books of  
 prosody, that they never fail to convey an idea  
 of metre; nor, if *either* prosodial sign were adopt-  
 ed, would *both* be necessary; since the omission  
 of a long mark would evidently denote the short-  
 ness of the unmarked vowel, or conversely. On  
 the whole, I cannot but approve this notation  
 for *Sanscrit* words, yet require something more  
 universally expressive of *Asiatick* letters: as it is  
 perfect, however, in its kind, and will appear  
 in the works of its learned inventor, I shall an-

nex, among the examples, four distichs from the *Bhágawat* expressed both in his method and mine \*: a translation of them will be produced on another occasion; but, in order to render this tract as complete as possible, a fuller specimen of *Sanscrit* will be subjoined with the original printed in the characters of *Bengal*, into which the *Bráhmans* of that province transpose all their books, few of them being able to read the *Dévanágari* letters: so far has their indolence prevailed over their piety!

Let me now proceed, not prescribing rules for others, but explaining those which I have prescribed for myself, to unfold my own system, the convenience of which has been proved by careful observation and long experience.

It would be superfluous to discourse on the organs of speech, which have been a thousand times dissected, and as often described by musicians or anatomists; and the several powers of which every man may perceive either by the touch or by sight, if he will attentively observe another person pronouncing the different classes of letters, or pronounce them himself distinctly before a mirror: but a short analysis of articulate sounds may be proper to introduce an examination of every separate symbol.

\* Plate IV.

*All things abound with error*, as the old searchers for truth remarked with despondence ; but it is really deplorable, that our first step from total ignorance should be into gross inaccuracy, and that we should begin our education in *England* with learning to read *the five vowels*, two of which, as we are taught to pronounce them, are clearly diphthongs. There are, indeed, five simple vocal sounds in our language, as in that of *Rome* ; which occur in the words *an innocent bull*, though not precisely in their natural order, for we have retained the true arrangement of the letters, while we capriciously disarrange them in pronunciation ; so that our eyes are satisfied, and our ears disappointed. The primary elements of articulation are the *soft and hard breathings*, the *spiritus lenis* and *spiritus asper* of the *Latin* Grammarians. If the lips be opened ever so little, the breath suffered gently to pass through them, and the feeblest utterance attempted, a sound is formed of so simple a nature, that, when lengthened, it continues nearly the same, except that, by the least acuteness in the voice it becomes a cry, and is probably the first sound uttered by infants ; but if, while this element is articulated, the breath be forced with an effort through the lips, we form an *aspirate* more or less harsh in proportion to the force exerted. When, in pro-

nouncing the simple vowel, we open our lips wider, we express a sound completely articulated, which most nations have agreed to place the *first* in their symbolical systems: by opening them wider still with the corners of them a little drawn back, we give birth to the *second* of the *Roman* vowels, and by a large aperture, with a farther inflexion of the lips and a higher elevation of the tongue, we utter the *third* of them. By pursing up our lips in the least degree, we convert the simple element into another sound of the same nature with the *first* vowel, and easily confounded with it in a broad pronunciation: when this new sound is lengthened, it approaches very nearly to the *fourth* vowel, which we form by a bolder and stronger rotundity of the mouth; a farther contraction of it produces the *fifth* vowel, which in its elongation almost closes the lips, a small passage only being left for the breath. These are all short vowels; and, if an *Italian* were to read the words *an innocent bull*, he would give the sound of each corresponding long vowel, as in the monosyllables of his own language, *fa, fi, fo, fe, fu*. Between these ten vowels are numberless gradations, and nice inflexions, which use only can teach; and, by the composition of them all, might be formed an hundred diphthongs, and a thousand triphthongs; many of which are found



in *Italian*, and were probably articulated by the *Greeks*; but we have only occasion, in this tract, for two diphthongs, which are compounded of the *first* vowel with the *third*, and with the *fifth*, and should be expressed by their constituent letters: as to those vocal compounds which begin with the *third* and *fifth* short vowels, they are generally and not inconveniently rendered by distinct characters, which are improperly ranged among the consonants. The tongue, which assists in forming some of the vowels, is the principal instrument in articulating two liquid sounds, which have something of a vocal nature; one, by striking the roots of the upper teeth, while the breath passes gently through the lips, another, by an inflexion upwards with a tremulous motion; and these two liquids coalesce with such ease, that a mixed letter, used in some languages, may be formed by the first of them followed by the second: when the breath is obstructed by the pressure of the tongue, and forced between the teeth on each side of it, a liquid is formed peculiar to the *British* dialect of the *Celtick*.

We may now consider in the same order, beginning with the root of the tongue and ending with the perfect close of the lips, those less musical sounds, which require the aid of a *vowel*, or at least of the *simple breathing*, to be fully ar-

ticulated; and it may here be premised, that the *harsh breathing* distinctly pronounced after each of these *consonants*, as they are named by grammarians, constitutes its proper *aspirate*.

By the assistance of the tongue and the palate are produced two congenial sounds, differing only as *hard* and *soft*; and these two may be formed still deeper in the throat, so as to imitate, with a long vowel after them, the voice of a raven; but if, while they are uttered, the breath be harshly protruded, two analogous articulations are heard, the second of which seems to characterize the pronunciation of the *Arabs*; while the nasal sound, very common among the *Persians* and *Indians*, may be considered as the *soft palatine* with part of the breath passing through the nose; which organ would by itself rather produce a *vocal* sound, common also in *Arabia*, and not unlike the cry of a young antelope and some other quadrupeds.

Next come different classes of *dentals*, and among the first of them should be placed the *sibilants*, which most nations express by an *indented* figure: each of the *dental* sounds is hard or soft, sharp or obtuse, and, by thrusting the tip of the tongue between the teeth, we form two sounds exceedingly common in *Arabick* and *English*, but changed into lisping sibilants by the *Persians* and *French*, while they on the

other hand have a sound unknown to the *Arabs*, and uncommon in our language, though it occurs in some words by the composition of the hard sibilant with our last vowel pronounced as a diphthong. The liquid *nasal* follows these, being formed by the tongue and roots of the teeth, with a little assistance from the other organ; and we must particularly remember, when we attend to the pronunciation of *Indian* dialects, that most sounds of this class are varied in a singular manner by turning the tongue upwards, and almost bending it back towards the palate, so as to exclude them nearly from the order, but not from the analogy, of dentals.

The *labials* form the last series, most of which are pronounced by the appulse of the lips on each other or on the teeth, and one of them by their perfect close: the letters, by which they are denoted, represent in most alphabets the curvature of one lip or of both; and a *natural character* for all articulate sounds might easily be agreed on, if nations would agree on any thing generally beneficial, by delineating the several organs of speech in the act of articulation, and selecting from each a distinct and elegant outline. A perfect language would be that, in which every idea, capable of entering the human mind, might be neatly and emphatically expressed by one specific word, simple if the idea were sim-

ple, complex, if complex ; and on the same principle a perfect system of letters ought to contain one specifick symbol for every sound used in pronouncing the language to which they belonged : in this respect the old *Persian* or *Zend* approaches to perfection ; but the *Arabian* alphabet, which all *Mohammedan* nations have inconsiderately adopted, appears to me so complete for the purpose of writing *Arabick*, that not a letter could be added or taken away without manifest inconvenience, and the same may indubitably be said of the *Dévanâgari* system ; which, as it is more naturally arranged than any other, shall here be the standard of my particular observations on *Asiatick* letters. Our *English* alphabet and orthography are disgracefully and almost ridiculously imperfect ; and it would be impossible to express either *Indian*, *Persian*, or *Arabian* words in *Roman* characters, as we are absurdly taught to pronounce them ; but a mixture of new characters would be inconvenient, and by the help of the diacritical marks used by the *French*, with a few of those adopted in our own treatises on *fluxions*, we may apply our present alphabet so happily to the notation of all *Asiatick* languages, as to equal the *Dévanâgari* itself in precision and clearness, and so regularly that any one, who knew the original letters, might rapidly and unerringly transpose into them

all the proper names, appellatives, or cited passages, occurring in tracts of *Asiatick* literature.

अ

This is the simplest element of articulation, or first *vocal* sound, concerning which enough has been said: the word *America* begins and ends with it; and its proper symbol therefore is A; though it may be often very conveniently expressed by E, for reasons, which I shall presently offer. In our own anomalous language we commonly mark this elementary sound by our *fifth* vowel, but sometimes express it by a strange variety both of vowels and diphthongs; as in the phrase, *a mother bird flutters over her young*; an irregularity, which no regard to the derivation of words or to blind custom can in any degree justify. The *Nágarí* letter is called *Acàr*, but is pronounced in *Bengal* like our *fourth* short vowel, and in the *west* of *India*, like our *first*: in all the dialects properly *Indian* it is considered as *inherent* in every consonant; and is placed last in the system of the *Tibetians*, because the letters, which include it, are first explained in their schools. If our double consonants were invariably connected, as in *Sanscrit*, it would certainly be the better way to omit the simple element, except when it begins a word. This letter answers to the *fat-bbab*, or *open* sound of

अ आ इ ई उ ऊ ऋ ॠ

ऌ ॡ ए ऐ ओ औ अं अः

क का कि की कु कू कृ कृ

कृ कृ के कै को कौ कं कः

ख ग घ ङ च छ ज झ व

ट ठ ड ढ ण त थ द ध न

प फ ब भ म य र ल व श

ष स ह क्ष श









the *Arabs*, and, in some few words, to the *Zeber* of the *Persians*, or an acute accent placed *above* the letter; but this *Arabian* mark, which was supplied in the *Pablavi* by a distinct character, is more frequently pronounced at *Isfahan* either like our *first* or our *second* short vowel, as in *cbafbm* and *ferzend*, and the distinction seems to depend, in general, on the nature of the consonant, which follows it. Two of our letters, therefore, are necessary for the complete notation of the *acàr* and *zeber*; and thus we may be able occasionally to avoid ridiculous or offensive equivocations in writing Oriental words, and to preserve the true pronunciation of the *Persians*, which differs as widely from that of the *Munimans* in *India*, as the language of our Court at *St. James's* differs from that of the rusticks in the *Gentle Shepherd*.

अ

When the *first* vowel, as the *Persians* pronounce it in the word *bakbt*, is doubled or prolonged as in *bákkbt*, it has the sound of the second *Nágari* vowel, and of the first *Arabick* letter, that is, of our long vowel in *cast*; but the *Arabs* deride the *Persians* for their broad pronunciation of this letter, which in *Iràn* has always the sound of our vowel in *call*, and is often so prolated, as to resemble the *fourth* and even the *fifth* of our

long vowels. Its natural mark would be the short *A* *doubled*; but an *acute* accent in the middle of words, or a *grave* at the end of them, will be equally clear, and conformable to the practice of polished nations on the continent of *Europe*. The very broad sound of the *Arabian* letter, which they call *extended*, and which the *Persians* extend yet more, as in the word *ásàn*, may aptly enough be represented by the prosodial sign, since it is constantly long; whereas the mark *hamzab* as constantly *shortens* the letter, and gives it the sound of the point above, or below, it; as in the words *ósùl* and *Islàm*: the changes of this letter may perplex the learner, but his perplexity will soon vanish, as he advances. In writing *Asiatick* names, we frequently confound the broad *à* with its correspondent short vowel, which we improperly express by an *O*; thus we write *Coffim* for *Kásim* in defiance of analogy and correctness. Our vowel in *fond* occurs but seldom, if ever, in *Arabian*, *Indian*, or *Persian* words: it is placed, nevertheless, in the general system with the short prosodial mark, and stands at the head of the vowels, because it is in truth only a variation of the simple breathing.



Our *third* vowel, correctly pronounced, appears next in the *Nágarí* system; for our *second*

short vowel has no place in it. This vocal sound is represented in *Arabick* by an acute accent *under* the letter; which at *Mecca* has almost invariably the same pronunciation; but, since, in the *Zend*, a character like the *Greek E-psilon* represents both our *second* and *third* short vowels, the *Persians* often pronounce *zir* like *zeber*, calling this country *Hend*, and the natives of it *Hendus*: nevertheless it will be proper to denote the *Sanscrit icar*, and the *Arabian cafr* by one unaltered symbol; as in the words *Indra* and *Imám*.



The *third* vowel produced or lengthened is, for the reason before suggested, best marked by an accent either acute or grave, as in *Italian*:

Se cerca, se dice :  
 L'amico dov'è ?  
 L'amico infelice,  
 Rispondi, morì !  
 Ah ! no ; sì gran duolo  
 Non darle per me.  
 Rispondi, ma folo :  
 Piangendo partì.

It was once my practice to represent this long vowel by two marks, as in the words *Lebeid* and *Deiwàn*, to denote the *point* in *Arabick* as well as the letter above it; but my present

opinion is, that *Lebid* and *Dtwàn* are more conformable to analogy, and to the *Italian* orthography, which of all *European* systems approaches nearest to perfection.

### §

This is our *fifth* vowel ; for our *fourth* short one is, like our *second*, rejected from the pure pronunciation of the *Sanscrit* in the west of *India* and at *Bánáras*, though the *Bengalese* retain it in the first *Nágarí* letter, which they call *ocàr*: to the notation of this sound, our vowel in *full* and the *Persian* in *gul* should be constantly appropriated, since it is a simple articulation, and cannot without impropriety be represented by a double letter. It answers to *bu-psi-lon*, and, like that, is often confounded with *iota*: thus *musbc* has the sound of *misbc* among the modern *Persians*, as *Numpha* was pronounced *Nympha* by the *Romans*. The *damm* of the *Arabs* is, however, frequently founded, especially in *Persia*, like our short *O* in *memory*, and the choice of two marks for a variable sound is not improper in itself, and will sometimes be found very convenient.

### §

The same lengthened, and properly expressed by an accent, as in the word *virtù*: it is a very long vowel in *Persian*, so as nearly to treble the

quantity of its correspondent short one; and this, indeed, may be observed of all the long vowels in the genuine *Isfabáni* pronunciation; but the letter *váü* is often redundant, so as not to alter the sound of the short vowel preceding it; as in *khósb* and *khód*: it may, nevertheless, be right to express that letter by an accent.



A vocal sound peculiar to the *Sanscrit* language: it is formed by a gentle vibration of the tongue preceding our *third* vowel pronounced *very short*, and may be well expressed by the prosodial mark, as in *Rĩshi*, a Saint. When it is connected with a consonant, as in *Crĩshna*, no part of it is used but the curve at the bottom. We have a similar sound in the word *merrily*, the second syllable of which is much shorter than the first syllable of *riches*.



The same complex sound considerably lengthened; and, therefore, distinguishable by the prosodial sign of a *long* vowel.



In *Bengal*, where the *ra* is often sunk in the pronunciation of compound syllables, this letter expresses both syllables of our word *lily*; but its

genuine found, I believe, is *lrĩ*, a short triphthong peculiar to the *Sanscrit* language.



Whatever be the true pronunciation of the former symbol, this is only an elongation of it, and may, therefore, be distinguished by the metrical sign of a long vowel.



Our *second* long vowel, best represented, like the others, by an accent, as in *Vèda*, the sacred book of the *Hindus*, which is a derivative from the *Sanscrit* root *vid*, to *know*. The notation, which I recommend, will have this important advantage, that learned foreigners in *Europe* will in general pronounce the oriental words, expressed by it, with as much correctness and facility as our own nation.



This is a diphthong composed of our *first* and *third* vowels, and expressible, therefore, by them, as in the word *Vaidya*, derived from *Vèda*, and meaning *a man of the medical cast*: in *Bengal* it is pronounced as the *Greek* diphthong in *poimèn*, a shepherd, was probably founded in ancient *Greece*. The *Arabs* and the *English* articulate this composition exactly alike, though we are

pleased to express it by a simple letter, which, on the continent of *Europe*, has its genuine sound. In the mouth of an *Italian* the constituent vowels in the words *mai* and *miei* do not perfectly coalesce, and, at the close of a verse, they are separated; but a *Frenchman* and a *Persian* would pronounce them nearly like the preceding long vowel; as in the word *Mai*, which at *Paris* means our month of the same name, and at *Isfahan* signifies *wine*: the *Persian* word, indeed, might with great propriety be written *mei*, as the diphthong seems rather to be composed of our *second* and *third* short vowels; a composition very common in *Italian* poetry.

## 3

Though a coalition of *acàr* and *ucàr* forms this sound in *Sanscrit*, as in the mystical word *óm*, yet it is in fact a simple articulation, and the *fourth* of our long vowels.

## 3

Here, indeed, we meet with a proper diphthong, compounded of our *first* and *fifth* vowels; and in *Persia* the constituent sounds are not perfectly united; as in the word *Firdausi*, which an *Italian* would pronounce exactly like a native of *Isfahan*. Perhaps, in *Arabick* words, it may be proper to represent by an accent the letters *yà* and *wáw*, which, preceded by the



*open* vowel, form the respective diphthongs in *Zobair* and *Faüberi*; but the omission of this accent would occasion little inconvenience.

ञ°

This is no vowel, but an abbreviation, at the end of a syllable, of the *nasal* consonants: thus the *Portuguese* write *Siaó* for *Siam* with a nasal termination; and the accurate M. D'ANVILLE expresses great unwillingness to write *Siam* for the country, and *Siamois* for the people of it, yet acknowledges his fear of innovating, 'notwithstanding his attachment to the original and proper denominations of countries and places.' It appears to me, that the addition of a distinct letter *ga* would be an improper and inconvenient mode of expressing the nasal sound, and that we cannot do better than adopt the *Indian* method of distinguishing it, in *Sanscrit*, *Chinese*, and *Persian* words, by a point above the letter; as in *Sinba*, a lion, *Cánbi*, the name of an illustrious Emperor, and *Sámán*, a household.

ञः

This too is an abbreviation or substitute, at the close of a syllable, for the *strong aspirate*, and may be distinguished in the middle of a word by a hyphen, as in *dub-c'ba*, pain, though it seems often to resemble the *Arabian* *bà*, which gives only a more forcible sound to the vowel,

which precedes it, as in *bbicmab*, science. It is well known, that, when such *Arabick* words are used in construction, the *final* aspirate of the first noun has the sound of *tà*; but, as the letter remains unaltered, it should, I think, be preserved in our characters, and expressed either by two *points* above it, as in *Arabick*, or by an accentual mark; since if we write *Zubdabu'lmulc*, or, *the Flower of the Realm*, with a comma to denote the suppression of the *álif*, every learner will know, that the first word should be pronounced *Zubdat*. The *hà* is often omitted by us, when we write *Persian* in *English* letters, but ought invariably to be inserted, as in *Sbáhnámab*; since the aspiration is very perceptibly founded in the true pronunciation of *dergáb*, *rúbáb*, and other similar words. The *Sanscrit* character before us has the singular property of being interchangeable, by certain rules, both with *ra*, and *śá*; in the same manner as the *Sylva* of the *Romans* was formed from the *Æolick* word *hylva*, and as *arbo*s was used in old *Latin* for *arbor*.

क

We come now to the first proper consonant of the *Indian* system, in which a series of letters, formed in the throat near the root of the tongue, properly takes the lead. This letter has the sound of our *k* and *c* in the words *king* and *cannibal*;

but there will be great convenience in expressing it uniformly by the *second* of those marks, whatever be the vowel following it. The *Arabs*, and perhaps all nations descended from SEM, have a remarkable letter founded near the palate with a hard pressure, not unlike the cawing of a raven, as in the word *Kásim*; and for this particular sound the redundancy of our own alphabet supplies us with an useful symbol: the common people in *Hbejáz* and *Egypt* confound it, indeed, with the first letter of *Gabr*, and the *Persians* only add to that letter the hard palatine sound of the *Arabian káf*; but, if we distinguish it invariably by *k*, we shall find the utility of appropriating our *c* to the notation of the *Indian* letter now before us. The third letter of the *Roman alphabet* was probably articulated like the *kappa* of the *Greeks*; and we may fairly suppose, that *Cicero* and *Cithara* were pronounced alike at *Rome* and at *Athens*: the *Welsh* apply this letter uniformly to the same sound, as in *cae* and *cefn*; and a little practice will render such words as *citáb* and *cinnara* familiar to our eyes.



We hear much of aspirated letters; but the only proper *aspirates* (those I mean, in which a strong breathing is distinctly heard after the consonants) are to be found in the languages of *In-*

*dia*; unless the word *cachexy*, which our medical writers have borrowed from the *Greek*, be thought an exception to the rule: this aspiration may be distinguished by a *comma*, as the letter before us is expressed in the word *c'hanitra*, a *spade*. The *Arabian*, *Persian*, and *Tuscan* aspirate, which is formed by a harsh protrusion of the breath, while the consonant is roughly articulated near the root of the tongue, may be written as in the word *makhzen*, a *treasury*.

†

Whatever vowel follow this letter, it should constantly be expressed as in the words *gul*, a flower, and *gil*, clay; and we may observe, as before, that a little use will reconcile us to this deviation from our irregular system. The *Germans*, whose pronunciation appears to be more consistent than our own, would scarce understand the *Latin* name of their own country, if an *Englishman* were to pronounce it, as he was taught at school.

‡

The proper aspirate of the last letter, as in the word *Rag'burvanfa*: the *Persians* and *Arabs* pronounce their *gbain* with a bur in the throat, and a tremulous motion of the tongue, which gives it a sound resembling that of *r*, as it is pronounced in *Northumberland*; but it is in truth a compound

guttural, though frequently expressed by a simple letter, as in *Gaza*, which should be written *Gbaz-zab*, a city of *Palestine*, and in *gazelle*, as the *French* naturalists call the *gbazàl*, or antelope, of the *Arabians*. The *Persian* word *mìgb*, a cloud, is *mèg'ba* in *Sanscrit*; as *mìsb*, a sheep, appears also to be derived from *mè'sba*, by that change of the long vowels, which generally distinguishes the *Iranian* from the *Indian* pronunciation.

## 3

This is the *nasal* palatine, which I have already proposed to denote by a *point* above the letter *n*; since the addition of a *g* would create confusion, and often suggest the idea of a different syllable. Thus ends the first series of *Nàgari* letters, consisting of the *hard* and *soft* guttural, each attended by its proper aspirate, and followed by a *nasal* of the same class; which elegant arrangement is continued, as far as possible, through the *Sanscrit* system, and seems conformable to the beautiful analogy of nature.

## δ

The next is a series of *compound* letters, as most grammarians consider them, though some hold them to be simple sounds articulated near the palate. The first of them has no distinct sign in our own alphabet, but is expressed, as in the word *Cbina*, by two letters, which are cer-

tainly not its component principles: it might, perhaps, be more properly denoted, as it is in the great work of M. D'HERBELOT, by *tʃb*; but the inconvenience of retaining our own symbol will be less than that of introducing a new combination, or inventing, after the example of Dr. FRANKLIN, a new character. *Cbina* is a *Sanscrit* word; and it will be convenient so to write it, though I feel an inclination to express it otherwise.



The same composition with a strong breathing articulated after it. Harsh as it may seem, we cannot, if we continue the former symbol, avoid expressing this sound, as in the word *cb'bandas*, metre.



This too seems to have been considered by the *Hindus* as a simple palatine, but appears in truth to be the complex expression of *dzʃb*: perhaps the same letter may, by a small difference of articulation, partake of two different sounds. This at least we may observe, that the letter under consideration is confounded, as a simple sound, with *ya*, and, as a compound, with *za*, one of its constituents: thus the *yásmín* of *Arabia* is by us called *jásmín*, while the same man is

*Giorgi* at *Rome* and *Zorzi* at *Venice*; or (to give an example of both in a single word) *yug*, or *junction*, at *Bándres*, is *jug* in *Bengal*, and was pronounced *zug*, or, in the nominative, *zugon* at *Athens*. We should, however, invariably express the letter before us by *ja*.

The *Arabian* letters *d'bald'*, *d'àd*, and *d'hà* are all pronounced in *Persia* like *za*, with a sort of lisp from an attempt to give them their genuine sound: they may be well expressed as in fluxionary characters, by a series of points above them,  $\dot{z}$ ,  $\ddot{z}$ ,  $\ddot{z}$ .



The preceding letter aspirated, as in the word *ʃbasha*, a fish.



This is the *second* nasal composed of the former and the letter *ya*. As the *Italian* word *agnello* and our *onion* contain a composition of *n* and *y*, they should regularly be written *anyello* and *onyon*; and the *Indian* sound differs only in the greater nasality of the first letter, which may be distinguished, as before, by a *point*. A very useful *Sanscrit* root, signifying *to know*, begins with the letter *ja* followed by this compound nasal, and should be written *jnyà*; whence *jnyána*, knowledge; but this harsh combination is in

*Bengal* softened into *gyà*: it is expressed by a distinct character, which stands last in the plate annexed\*.

᳚

In the curious work entitled *Tobfabu'l Hind*, or *The Present of INDIA*, this is the *fourth* series of *San scrit* letters; but in general it has the *third* rank, more agreeably, I think, to the analogy of the system. This class is pronounced with an inflexion of the tongue towards the roof of the mouth, which gives an obtuse sound to the consonant, and may be distinguished by an accent above it. The first is the INDIAN *t'a*, as in the word *cò't'ara*, a rotten tree, and is commonly expressed in *Persian* writings by *four* points, but would be better marked by the ARABIAN *tà*, which it very nearly resembles.

᳛

The same with a strong breathing after it, as in *Vaicunt'ba*, or *unwearied*, an epithet of *Visbm.*

᳜

A remarkable letter, which the *Muslimans* call the INDIAN *dàl*; and express also by four points over it; but it should, by analogy to the others, be distinguished by an accentual mark as in the word *dan'da*, punishment. When the

\* Plate II.



tongue is inverted with a slight vibratory motion, this letter has a mixture of the *ra*, with which it is often, but incorrectly, confounded; as in the common word *ber* for *bera*, great. It resembles the ARABIAN *d'ád*.

ᵊ

The preceding letter aspirated, as in *D'bácà*, improperly pronounced *Dacca*. In the same manner may be written the ARABIAN *d'ba*, but without the comma, since its aspirate is less distinctly heard than in the *Indian* sound.

ᵋ

This is the *nasal* of the third series, and formed by a similar inversion of the tongue: in *Sanscrit* words it usually follows the letters *ra* and *sha* (as in *Brábmén'a*, derived from *Brabman'*, the Supreme Being; *Viśnú*, a name of his *preserving* power); or precedes the other letters of the third class.

ᵌ

Here begins the *fourth* series, on which we have little more to remark. The first letter of this class is the common *ta*, or *bard* dental, if it may not rather be considered as a *lingual*.

ᵍ

Its aspirate, which ought to be written with a comma, as in the word *Afwatt'ba*, the *Indian*

fig-tree, lest it be confounded by our countrymen with the *Arabian* found in *thurayyà*, the *Pleiads*, which is precisely the *English* aspiration in *think*; a sound, which the *Persians* and *French* cannot easily articulate: in *Persian* it should be expressed by *s* with a point above it.

द

The *soft dental* in *Dèvatà*, or *Deity*.

ध

The same aspirated as in *D'berma*, justice, virtue, or piety. We must also distinguish this letter by a comma from the *Arabian* in *dhahab*, gold; a sound of difficult articulation in *France* and *Persia*, which we write *thus* very improperly, instead of retaining the genuine *Anglofaxon* letter, or expressing it, as we might with great convenience, *dhus*.

न

The simple *nasal*, sounded by the teeth with a little assistance from the nostrils, but not so much as in many *French* and *Persian* words. Both this *nasal* and the former occur in the name *Naráyen'a*, or *dwelling in water*.

प

Next come the *labials* in the same order; and first the hard labial *pu*, formed by a strong compression of the lips; which so ill suits the

configuration of an *Arabian* mouth, that it cannot be articulated by an *Arab* without much effort.

८

The proper aspirate of *pa*, as in the word *shepherd*, but often pronounced like our *fa*, as in *fela*, instead of *p'bela*, fruit. In truth the *fa* is a distinct letter; and our *pha*, which in *English* is redundant, should be appropriated to the notation of this *Indian* labial.

२

The *soft* labial in *Budd'ba*, wife, and the second letter in most alphabets used by *Europeans*; which begin with a vowel, a labial, a palatine, and a lingual: it ought ever to be distinguished in *Nágarí* by a transverse bar, though the copyists often omit this useful distinction.

३

The *Indian* aspirate of the preceding letter, as in the word *bháśhá*, or a *spoken* dialect. No comma is necessary in this notation, since the sound of *bba* cannot be confounded with any in our own language.

४

This is the last nasal, as in *Menu*, one of the first created beings according to the *Indians*: it

is formed by closing the lips entirely, whilst the breath passes gently through the nose ; and here ends the regular arrangement of the *Nāgarī* letters. Another series might have been added, namely, *ṣa*, *ṣba*, *za*, *zba*, which are in the same proportion as *ta*, *tba*, *da*, *dba*, and the rest ; but the two last sounds are not used in *Sanṣcrit*.

### य

Then follows a set of letters approaching to the nature of vowels : the first of them seems in truth to be no more than our *third* short vowel beginning a diphthong, and may, therefore, be thought a superfluous character : since this union, however, produces a kind of consonant articulated near the palate, it is ranked by many among the consonants, and often confounded with *ja* : hence *Yamunā*, a sacred river in *India*, called also the *Daughter of the Sun*, is written *Ṣomanes* by the *Greeks*, and *Ṣumnā*, less properly, by the *English*.

### ब

The two liquids *na* and *ma*, one of which is a lingual and the other a labial, are kept apart, in order to preserve the analogy of the system ; and the other two are introduced between the two semivowels : the first of these is *ra*, as in *RA'MA*, the conqueror of *Silān*.

ल

The second is *la*, in *Lanca*, another name of that island both in *Tibut*, and in *India*. A defect in the organs of the common *Bengalese* often causes a confusion between these two liquids, and even the sound of *na* is frequently substituted for the letter before us.

व

When this character corresponds, as it sometimes does in *Sanscrit*, with our *wa*, it is in fact our *fifth short* vowel preceding another in forming a diphthong, and might easily be spared in our system of letters; but, when it has the sound of *va*, it is a labial formed by striking the lower lip against the upper teeth, and might thus be arranged in a series of proportionals, *pa, fa, ba, va*. It cannot easily be pronounced in this manner by the inhabitants of *Bengal* and some other provinces, who confound it with *ba*, from which it ought carefully to be distinguished; since we cannot conceive, that in so perfect a system as the *Sanscrit*, there could ever have been two symbols for the same sound. In fact the *Montes Parveti* of our ancient Geographers were so named from *Parveta*, not *Parbeta*, a mountain. The *waw* of the *Arabs* is always a vowel, either separate or coalescing with another in the form of a diphthong; but in *Persian*

words it is a consonant, and pronounced like our *va*, though with rather less force.

†

Then follow three *sibilants*, the first of which is often, very inaccurately, confounded with the second, and even with the third: it belongs to that class of consonants, which, in the notation here proposed, are expressed by acute accents above them to denote an inversion of the tongue towards the palate, whence this letter is called in *India* the *palatine sa*. It occurs in a great number of words, and should be written as in *palás'a*, the name of a sacred tree with a very brilliant flower. In the same manner may be noted the *s'àd* of the *Arabs* and *Hebrews*, which last it resembles in shape, and probably resembled in sound; except that in *Casmír* and the provinces bordering on *Persia* it is hardly distinguishable from the following letter.

‡

The *second* is improperly written *sha* in our *English* system, and *cha*, still more erroneously, in that of the *French*; but the form generally known may be retained, to avoid the inconvenience of too great a change even from wrong to right. This letter, of which *sa* and *ba* are not the component parts, is formed so far back in the head, that the *Indians* call it a *cere-*

*bral*: either it was not articulated by the *Greeks*; or they chose to express it by their *Xi*; since of the *Persian* word *Ardashir* they have formed *Artaxerxes*.

ॡ

The dental *sa*, which resembles the *Hebrew* letter of the same sound; and, like that, is often mistaken by ignorant copyists for the *ma*.

ॢ

The strong breathing *ba*, but rather misplaced in the *Nágarí* system; since it is the second element of articulate sounds: the very hard breathing of the *Arabs* may be well expressed by doubling the mark of aspiration, as in *Mubham-med*, or by an accent above it in the manner of the long vowels, as in *Ab'med*.

ॣ

The *Indian* system of letters closes with a compound of *ca* and *sha*, as in the word *paric-shà*, ordeal: it is analogous to our *x*, a superfluous character, of no use, that I know of, except in algebra. The *Bengalese* give it the sound of *cya*, or of our *k* in such words as *kind* and *shy*; but we may conclude, that the other pronunciation is very ancient, since the old *Persians* appear to have borrowed their word *Racshab* from the *Racsha*, or *demon* of the *Hindus*, which is written with the letter before us. The *Greeks*

rendered this letter by their *Kbi*, changing *Dacshin*, or the south, into *Dakbin*.

All the sounds used in *Sanscrit*, *Arabick*, *Persian*, and *Hindî*, are arranged systematically in the table prefixed to this dissertation \*; and the singular letter of the *Arabs*, which they call *âin*, is placed immediately before the consonants. It might have been classed, as the modern *Jews* pronounce it, among the strong *nasals* of the *Indians*; but, in *Arabia* and *Persia*, it has a very different sound, of which no verbal description can give an idea, and may not improperly be called a *nasal vowel*: it is uniformly distinguished by a *circumflex* either above a short vowel or over the letter preceding a long one, as *îbn*, learning, *âdlim*, learned.

Agreeably to the preceding analysis of letters, if I were to adopt a new mode of *English* orthography, I should write *Addison's* description of the angel in the following manner, distinguishing the *simple breathing*, or first element, which we cannot invariably omit, by a perpendicular line above our first or second vowel:

Sò hwen sm éñjel, bai divain cãmánd,  
 Widh raisn tempests shécs a gilti land,  
 Sch az äv lét ór pél Britanya pást,  
 Cálm and firín hi draivz dhi fyúryas blást,  
 And, plíz'd dh'álmaitiz árderz tu perfórm,  
 Raids in dhi hwerlwind and daire&s dhi stárm.

\* Plate I.



This mode of writing poetry would be the touchstone of bad rhymes, which the eye as well as the ear would instantly detect; as in the first couplet of this description, and even in the last, according to the common pronunciation of the word *perform*. I close this paper with specimens of oriental writing, not as fixed standards of orthography, which no individual has a right to settle, but as examples of the method, which I recommend; and, in order to relieve the dryness of the subject, I annex translations of all but the first specimen, which I reserve for another occasion.

## I.

*Four Distichs from the SRIBHA'GAWAT* \*.

## Mr. WILKINS's Orthography.

āhāmēvāsāmēvāgrē nānyādyāt sādāsāt pārām  
pāschādahām yādētāchchā yōvāsēēshyētā sōfmyāhām

rēētērthām yāt prātēeyētā nā prātēeyētā chātmanēē.  
tādvēēdyād ātmānō māyām yāthā bhāō yāthā tāmah

yāthā māhantēē bhōōtānēē bhōōtēshōōchchāvāchēshwānōō  
prāvēēshitānyāprāvēēshitānēē tāthā tēshōō nātēshwāhām

ētāvādēvā jēējnāfyām tāttwā jēējnāsōōnātmanāh  
ānwayā vyātēērēkābhyām yāt syāt sārvaṭrā sārvaḍā.

\* See Plate IV. The Letters are in Plate II.

## श्रीभगवानुवाच

अहमेवासमेवाग्रे नान्यद्यत् सदसत् परम्  
पश्चाद्दहं यदेतच्च योवशिष्येत सोऽस्म्यहम्

ऋतेर्थायत्प्रतीयेत न प्रतीयेत चात्मनि  
तद्दिद्यादात्मनो मायां यथा भासो यथा तमः

यथा महांति भूतानि भूतेषूच्चावचेषु  
प्रविष्टान्यप्रविष्टानि तथ्यातेषु न तेषु हं

एतावदेव जिज्ञास्यं तस्य जिज्ञासुनात्मनः  
अन्वयव्यतिरेकाभ्यां यत् स्यात् सर्वत्र सर्वदा



This wonderful passage I should express in the following manner:

ahamévafamévagrè nányadyat sadafat param  
 pas'chádaham yadétachcha yóvas'ifhyéta sōfmyaham  
 rītért'ham yat pratíyéta na pratíyéta chátmani  
 tadvidyádátmanó máyám yat'hà bhásó yat'hà tamah  
 yat'hà mahánti bhútáni bhútéshúchchávachéshwanu  
 pravish'tányapravish' táni tat'hà téshu na téshwaham  
 étáavadéva jijnyásyam tattwa jijnyáfunátmanah  
 anwaya vyatirécábhyám yat syát servatra servadā.

## II.

## MO'HA MUDGARA.

The title of this fine piece properly signifies *The Mallet of Delusion or Folly*, but may be translated *A Remedy for Distraction of Mind*: it is composed in regular anapæstic verses according to the strictest rules of *Greek prosody*, but in rhymed couplets, two of which here form a *s'loca*.

मूढजहीहिबिनागमउक्तां ननुतनुबुद्धिमनः सृष्टिउक्तां ।  
 यन्नभसोनिजकर्मोपात्तं विदुः त्वेनविनोदयच्छिदुः ॥

कातवकात्राकसेपुत्रः स° साबोयमतीवविचित्रः ।  
 कन्यत्र° वानुतयायाउस्तत्र° चिन्तयतदिद° भ्रातः ॥

মান্দবর্ধনজনযৌবনগর্ভ° হষতিনিমেষাৎকালঃ সর্ব° ।

মায়ামমমিদমথিল° হিহ্ববৃক্ষপদ° পুবিশাশ্বেদিহ্বা ॥

নলিনীদলগতজলবত্ত্বন° উদ্বজ্জীবনমতিশয়চপল° ।

ক্ষণমিহসঙ্কলস° গাতিবেকাভবতিভবার্ণবত্ত্বণেনৌকা ॥

যাবজ্জান° ভাবনমবা° ভাবজ্জানীভেচবেশয়ন° ।

ইতিস° সাবেসফুর্টভবদোষঃ কথমিহমানবত্ত্বসত্ত্বোষঃ ॥

দিনযামিনেয়াসাম° পুাতঃ শিশিববসত্ত্বোপূনবামাতঃ ।

কালঃ ক্রীড়তিগচ্ছত্ৰায়ুদুদপিনমৃকৃত্যাশাভায়ুঃ ॥

বদ° গলিত° পলিত° মুত্ত° দত্তবিহীন° জাত° তত্ত° ।

কবর্ধুতকল্পিতশাভিতত্ত° উদপিনমৃকৃত্যাশাভাত° ॥

সুবববমান্দিবত্ত্বকত্ত্বলবাসঃ শয্যাভুক্তলমজিন° বাসঃ ।

সর্বপবিগ্রহভোগত্যাগঃ কস্যস্ব° নকবোতিবিবাগঃ ॥

শত্রৌমিত্রেপুহেবনৌমান্দবব্ব° বিগ্রহসাত্তো ।

ভবসমাচিত্তঃ সর্বত্র° বাঙ্কল্যাচিবাহুদিবিক্ত° ॥

অষ্টকৃলাচলসপ্তসমুদ্রাবক্ষপুৰন্দবদিনকববদ্রাঃ ।

নহু° নাহ° নাম° নোকমুদপিকিমর্থ° ক্রিয়তোশোকঃ ॥

স্বয়মমিচান্যত্রৈকোবিস্তব্যর্থ° ন্যস্যসিম্যস্যসহিষ্ণুঃ ।

সৰ্ব° পশ্যস্বন্যাযান° সৰ্ব্বত্রোৎসৃজভেদজ্ঞান° ॥

বালস্তাবৎক্রীড়াশক্তস্বৰ্গস্তাবৎউকনীৰক্তঃ ।

বৃষ্ণস্তাবৎচিত্তামগ্নঃ পৰমেব্রহ্মণিকোপিনলগ্নঃ ॥

দ্বাদশপঙ্কটিকাভিৰাশেষঃ শিষ্যাণা° কথিতোভ্যুপদেশঃ ।

যেষা° নৈষববোতিবিবেক° তেষা° কঃ কৃকৃতামতিবেক° ॥

múd'ha jahíhi dhanágamatrīshnám  
 curu tenubuddhimanah fuvitrīshnám  
 yallabhañe nijacarmópáttam  
 vittam téna vinódaya chittam.

cá tava cántà castè putrah  
 fanścároyam atívavichittrah  
 caśya twam vè cuta áyáta  
 štattwam chintaya tadidam bhrátah.

má curu dhanajanayauvanagarvam  
 harati niméshát calah farvam  
 máyámayamidamac'hilam hitwà  
 brehmapadam previs'ás'u viditwà.

nalimídalagatajalavattaralam  
 tadvajjivanamatis'aya chapalam  
 cshenamiha fajjana fangatirécà  
 bhawati bhawárnavataranè naucà.

angam galitam palitam mund'am  
 dantavihin'am játam tund'am  
 caradhritacampitas'obhitadand'am  
 tadapi namunchatyás'a bhánd'am.

yávajjananam távanmaran'am  
 távajjananì jat'harè s'ayanam  
 iti fanfàrè sp'hut atara dóshah  
 cat'hamiha mánava tava fantóshah.

dinayáminyau fáyam prátah  
 sis iravafantau punaráyátah  
 cálah críd'ati gach'hatyáyu  
 ftadapi na munchatyás'áváyuh.

furavaramandiratarutalaváfah  
 s'ayyà bhútalamajinam váfah  
 fervaparigrahabhógatyágah  
 casya fuc'ham na caróti virágah.

s'atrau mitrè putrè bandhau  
 mà curu yatnam vighrahafandhau  
 bhava samachittah fervatra twam  
 vánch'hafyachirád yadi visfnutwam.

afh'taculáchalafepafamúdrá  
 brehmapurandaradinacararudráh  
 natwam náham náyam lóca  
 ftadapi cimart'ham criyatè s'ócáh.

twayi mayi cháhyatraicò vishnur  
 vyart'ham cupyafi mayyafahishnuh  
 fervam pas'yátmanyátmánam  
 fervatrótsrija bhédajnyánam.  
 válastávat críd'ás'acta  
 starun'astávat tarúniractah  
 vridhastávach chintámagnah  
 peremé brahman'í cópi nalagnah.  
 dwádas'a pajj'hat'icábhiras'és'hah  
 síshyánam cat'hitóbhyupadés'ah  
 yéshám naisha caróti vivécam  
 téshàm cah curutámatirécam.

## A verbal Translation.

1. Restrain, deluded *mortal*, thy thirst of acquiring wealth; excite an aversion *from it* in *thy* body, understanding, and inclination: with the riches, which thou acquirest by thy own actions, with these gratify thy soul.

2. Who *is* thy wife; who thy son; how extremely wonderful is even this world; whose *creature* thou also *art*; whence thou camest—meditate on this, O brother, *and again* on this.

3. Make no boast of opulence, attendants, youth; all *these* time snatches away in the twinkling of an eye: checking all this illusion like *Máyà*, set thy heart on the foot of BRAHME, speedily gaining knowledge of him.



4. As a drop of water moves tremulous on the lotos-leaf, thus *is* human life inexpressibly slippery: the company of the virtuous *endures* here but for a moment; that is our ship in passing the ocean of the world.

5. The body *is* tottering; the head, grey; the mouth, toothless: the delicate staff trembles in the hand, which holds it: still the flaggon of covetousness remains unemptied.

6. How soon *are we* born! how soon dead! how long lying in the mother's womb! How great is the prevalence of vice in this world! Wherefore, O man, hast thou complacency here below?

7. Day and night, evening and morning, winter and spring depart and return: time sports, life passes on; yet the wind of expectation continues unrestrained.

8. To dwell under the mansion of the high Gods at the foot of a tree, to have the ground for a couch, and a hide for vesture; to renounce all extrinseck enjoyments,—whom doth not such devotion fill with delight?

9. Place not thy affections too strongly on foe or friend, on a son or a kinsman, in war or in peace: be thou even-minded towards all, if thou desirest speedily to attain the nature of VISHNU.



جَاءَتْ إِلَى عَلَى حَذْرٍ  
 وَالْقَلْبُ طَارَ بِهِ الدَّمْعُ  
 فَخَلَسَتْ مِنْهَا الْعُرْمُ  
 الْأَنْفَاجَ هَاشِدٍ  
 فَقَدَّتْ بِهَا نَجْمَ التَّحْنِ  
 بِسَوَادِ جَفْنِ الْقَمَرِ  
 فَرَمَى النُّجُومَ عَلَى أَشْرَ  
 عَلَى حِدَا فِيهَا التُّرْهُرُ  
 عَجَبًا لَهَا تَيْدِ الْفَيْزِ  
 الْأَضْمَاحَ فِي صَوْرِ الْحَزَنِ  
 حَذَرَتْ عِنَاقِي مِنْ جَفْرِ  
 وَسَقَى رِيَاضًا لِلنَّظْرِ  
 وَمَرَّتْ فَوَادِي الشَّرْرِ  
 أَنْ جَدَّ لِي عِزُّمُ السَّفْرِ  
 وَأَذَقْتُهُ حُرِّ سَقَرِ  
 وَطَلَعَ نَاصِحًا الْعُدْمُ  
 أَرْضَ وَمَا تَرْضَى الْمُقَرَّ  
 وَنَارَ قَوْمِي بِنِ  
 حَوْلَ الْبَيْتِ لِأَسْوَى لُحْنِ  
 وَنَسِيتُ لِأَمْرِ الشَّرِّ  
 يَا وَجَّحَ جِلِّ قَدِّ قَرِّ  
 وَأَمْرَ السَّلْوِ وَمَا قَدَّمَ

مَا أَسْرَا نَسْلَ السُّتِي  
 التُّومُ أَثْقَلَ جَفْنَهَا  
 رَصَدَتْ أَسَاوِدَ قَوْمِهَا  
 تَوَعَّتْ خَلَاخِيًا لَهَا  
 تَشَكُّو الطَّرِيقَ لَطْمًا  
 فِي لَيْلَةٍ قَدْ كَحَلَّتْ  
 وَتَرَءَ الْعَمَامَ كَأَجْمَلِ  
 تَبَكَرَ عِيُونََ لِلسَّمَاءِ  
 وَالْبَزْنَ يُبَسِّمُ تَعْرُ  
 وَالْتَرَهْدُ كَمَا يُحَيَّرُونَ  
 فَهَوَتْ تَعَابِقِي وَفَدِي  
 وَالذَّمْعُ بَلَّ خُدُودَهَا  
 وَنَفَسَتْ إِذْ كَانَتْ  
 ظَلَّتْ تَعَابِقِي عَلَى  
 قَالَتْ أَذِيتُ فَوَادِيَا  
 تَعَصِي أَوْ أَمْرَ لِلْهُمَى  
 وَتَدَا وَمِنْ أَمْرِ إِلَى  
 يَوْمًا نَسِيرُكَ الْحَارِ  
 مَاذَا أُنَادِكُ جَوْلَهُ  
 أَلْفَتْ أَظْأَاءَ الْفَلَا  
 أَزُقِدْمَلَّتْ جَوَارِيَا  
 فَأَرْحَمَ عَلَى قَلْبِي الدِّمَى

10. Eight original mountains, and seven seas, BRAHME, INDRA, the Sun, and RUDRA, *these are permanent*: not thou, not I, not this or that people; wherefore then should anxiety be raised in our minds?

11. In thee, in me, in every other being is VISHNU; foolishly art thou offended with me, not bearing my approach: see every soul in thy own soul; in all places lay aside a notion of diversity.

12. The boy so long delights in his play; the youth so long pursues his damsel; the old man so long broods over uneasiness; *that* no one meditates on the Supreme Being.

13. This is the instruction of learners delivered in twelve distinct stanzas: what more can be done with such, as this work fills not with devotion?

### III.

The following elegy, which is chosen as a specimen of *Arabick* \*, was composed by a learned Philosopher and Scholar, MIR MUHAMMED HUSAIN, before his journey to *Haidarabad* with RICHARD JOHNSON, Esq.

*má ánsa lá ánsa állati  
jáat ilayya álai badbar*

\* Plate V. and Plate III.

dlnaümü dthkala jafnabá  
 waálkalbu t'ára bibi áldbaár  
 ras'adat ásáwida kaímihá  
 fatakballasat minbá álgharar  
 nazaát kbalákbilán' lehá  
 állá tufájibá bisbar  
 tesbcú dlt arika lid'bulmabir  
 fakadat bibá najma álsabbar  
 fi lailabin' kad cabhalat  
 bisawádihá jafna álkamar  
 wa terai álghamáma cájmuliní  
 terái álnujúma álai ájbar  
 tebci t'yunon' lilsemái  
 álai b'adáyikihá álzubar  
 waálberku yebfimu tbegrubu  
 ájabán' libática álghiyar  
 waálrádu cáda yukharriku  
 álás'mákba fi s'ummi álb'ajar  
 jabawat tuáánikuni wakad  
 b'adbarat ínáki min kbafar  
 waáldemú bella khudúdabá  
 wasakai riyad'án' lilnad'bar  
 wateneffasat id b callamat  
 waramat fuwádi biálsberar  
 d'ballat tuáátibunéi álai  
 án jedda li ázmu álsafar  
 kálat ádhabta fuwádaná  
 waádbaktabu b'erra álsakar

*tadsi' áwámera lilbarwai*  
*watut'íúu nás'ib'aca álghudar*  
*watedúru min árd'in' ilai*  
*árdin' wamá terd'ái álmekarr*  
*yaúmán tesiru bica álbibbáru*  
*watárab'an' turmai bibarr*  
*má dbá áfádaca jaúlabow*  
*b'aúla álbiládi firwai áld'ajar*  
*aálista ád'bbàa álfelá*  
*wanesita áráma álbásher*  
*ám kad melelta jiwáraná*  
*yá wáib'a khillin kad nafar*  
*fárb'em álai kalbi álladhi*  
*ráma álsuluwwa wamá kadar.*

## The Translation.

1. Never, oh ! never shall I forget the fair one, who came to my *tent* with timid circumspection :
2. Sleep fat heavy on her eye-lids, and her heart fluttered with fear.
3. She had marked the dragons of her tribe (the *sentinels*), and had dismissed all dread of danger from them :
4. She had laid aside the rings, which used to grace her ankles; lest the sound of them should expose her to calamity :

5. She deplored the darkness of the way,  
which hid from her the morning-star.

6. It was a night, when the eye-lashes of the  
moon were tinged with the black powder (*Al-*  
*cobol*) of the gloom :

7. *A night*, in which thou mightest have seen  
the clouds, like camels, eagerly grazing on the  
stars ;

8. While the eyes of heaven wept on the  
bright borders of the sky ;

9. The lightning displayed his shining teeth,  
with wonder at this change *in the firmament* ;

10. And the thunder almost burst the ears of  
the deafened rocks.

11. She was desirous of embracing me, but,  
through modesty, declined my embrace.

12. Tears bedewed her cheeks, and, to my  
eyes, watered a bower of roses.

13. When she spake, her panting sighs blew  
flames into my heart.

14. She continued expostulating with me on  
my excessive desire of travel.

15. ‘ Thou hast melted my heart, she said,  
‘ and made it feel inexpressible anguish.

16. ‘ Thou art perverse in thy conduct to her  
‘ who loves thee, and obsequious to thy guileful  
‘ adviser.

17. 'Thou goest round from country to  
'country, and art never pleased with a fixed  
'residence.

18. 'One while the seas roll with thee ; and,  
'another while, thou art agitated on the shore.

19. 'What fruit, but painful fatigue, can arise  
'from rambling over foreign regions ?

20. 'Hast thou associated thyself with the  
'wild antelopes of the desert, and forgotten the  
'tame deer ?

21. 'Art thou weary then of our neighbour-  
'hood? O wo to him, who flees from his be-  
'loved !

22. 'Have pity at length on my afflicted  
'heart, which seeks relief, and cannot obtain  
'it.'

Each couplet of the original consists of two  
*Dimeter Iambicks*, and must be read in the  
proper cadence.

#### IV.

As a specimen of the old *Persian* language and  
character, I subjoin a very curious passage  
from the *Zend*, which was communicated to  
me by BAHMAN the son of BAHRA'M, a na-  
tive of *Yezd*, and, as his name indicates, a  
*Parsi* : he wrote the passage from memory ;  
since his books in *Pablavi* and *Deri* are not



yet brought to *Bengal*. It is a supposed answer of I'ZAD OR GOD TO ZERA'HTUSHT, who had asked by what means mankind could attain happiness.

*Az pid u mād cbe ce pid u mād ne kbošmūd  
bid hargiz bibišt ne vinūd; be jāyi cirfab bizab  
vinūd: mekán rā be āzarm nic dārid, cebān rā be  
bičb gūnab mayāzārid: aj kbīšāvendī dervīš  
nang medārid: dād u vendād i kbālīki yečā beb  
cār dārid; az rištākbizi ten pasin endīšbeb ne-  
māyid; mabādā ce asbū ten kbīš rā dūzakbī cu-  
nīd, va ānche be kbīšten našbābad be cašān ma-  
pašendīd va ma cunīd: herche be giti cunīd be  
mainū az aūeb paštrab āyed\*.*

#### A Verbal Translation.

“ If you do that with which your father and mother are not pleased, you shall never see heaven; instead of good spirits, you shall see evil beings: behave with honesty and with respect to the great; and on no account injure the mean: hold not your poor relations a reproach to you: imitate the justice and goodness of the Only Creator: meditate on the resurrection of the future body; lest you make your souls and bodies the inhabitants of hell; and whatever

\* Plate VII. The *Zend* Letters are in Plate III.

۱۰۰. سن سنجید . ۱۰۴ . سن سنس . ۱۰۵ . سن سنس . ۱۰۶ . سن سنس .

۱۰۷ . سن سنس . ۱۰۸ . سن سنس . ۱۰۹ . سن سنس . ۱۱۰ . سن سنس .

۱۱۱ . سن سنس . ۱۱۲ . سن سنس . ۱۱۳ . سن سنس . ۱۱۴ . سن سنس .

۱۱۵ . سن سنس . ۱۱۶ . سن سنس . ۱۱۷ . سن سنس . ۱۱۸ . سن سنس .

۱۱۹ . سن سنس . ۱۲۰ . سن سنس . ۱۲۱ . سن سنس . ۱۲۲ . سن سنس .



would be unpleasing to yourselves, think not that pleasing to others, and do it not : whatever good you do on earth, for that you shall receive a retribution in heaven.”

It will, perhaps, be suspected (and the language itself may confirm the suspicion), that this doctrine has been taken from a religion very different both in age and authority, from that of ZERA'H-TUSHT.

## V.

The following story in modern *Persian* was given to me by *Mirzà ABDU'LRAHHIM* of *Isfabàn* : it seems extracted from one of the many poems on the loves of *MEJNU'N* and *LAILI*, the *ROMEO* and *JULIET* of the East. Each verse consists of a *Cretick* foot followed by two *Choriambi*, or a *Choriambus* and a *Moloffus*.

شیر مست سرپستان الم      پرورش یافته دامن غم

آبدنک و رخ لیلیای جنون      خال رخساره بامون مجنون

یافت چون راه یکامانه عشق      آستان شد در خانه عشق

بهرش شخص جنون بنایم فکند      قصه عاشقیش کشت باند

نقل او نقل مجالس باشد	در عرب هر طرفی غوغا شد
صاحب کمکت و ثروت بجهان	بد امیری بعرب و الا شان
پر کل داغ محبت چیده	ترکتل ز غم هجران دیده
تلخی زهر فراقش بر مذاق	دیده در طفلی خود سوز فراق
کرد فرمان بنظامی در حال	یافت چون قصه آن در درسه کمال
شویه تعجیل روان چون صرصه	که سوی خجد قدم ساز ز سر
به برم زود بسیار همراه	آمد دلبرده ز مجنون بنگاه
لیلی آن پادشه ماگ جمال	رفت و آورد ظلامک در حال
که تو هم شو بسوی دشت روان	بنظامی دگرش شد فرمان
شمع پر نور محبت مجنون	چانب زینت ارباب جنون
آن جگر سوز غم اندوخته را	زود آورد برم آن سوخته را
والی کشور عشقش همراه	رفت و برگشت ظلامک چون گاه

دید زاری بغم عشق اسیر	کرد ادرا چونظر مرد امیر
زخم هجران به تنش پیراهن	بر سرش مشخص جزون کرده وطن
موزه از آبله پابر پا	موی سر بر بدنش کثرت قبا
خرقه از یک بیابان بردوش	مانما از خار مغیالان بر موش
بیج خواهی که تمنیات دهم	گفت گامی کم شده وادی نم
لبی آرم بیزت خاطر خواه	سر فرازت کنم از مانت و جاه
زره را ام نظری با خورشید	گفت نی نی که بعید است بعید
سیر آن صفحہ رضادنگو	گفت خواهی که کنی راست بگو
راست بر کوی بجان لیلی	یتداری بجا بش میایی
ذره مخاک درت تاج سرم	گفت گامی قدوه ارباب کرم
خواهش وصل زلی المانیست	بر دلم درد زلیلی کافعی است
بس بود بر تویی از مهر منیر	بهر خور سندی این جزو حقیر
ویده گریان دمره اشک تششان	گفت و کردید سوی دشت روان

*Shirmasti seri pistáni álem*  
*perveresh yáftehi dámeni ghem*  
*ābi rang o rokbi lailáyi jonún*  
*kbáli rokhšárehi hámun Mejnún*  
*yáft cbún ráb bi cáshánehi ísbk*  
*āfitán sbud bideri kbánehi ísbk*  
*ber feresb sbakhs'i jonún sáyab ficand*  
*kis'sebi áāsbiki ásb gasbt boland*  
*der árab ber t'arafi gbaughà sbud*  
*nakli u nokli mejális-hà sbud*  
*búd ámrì biárab válà sbàn*  
*s'ab'ibi micnat ò servat \* bijebàn*  
*torc tázi gbemi bejrán didab*  
*pur guli dághi mob'abbat chidab*  
*didab der t'ifliyi khód súzi ferák*  
*talbbiyi zabri ferákesb bimezák*  
*yáft cbun kis'sebi ān derd sigál*  
*card fermán bighulámì der bál*  
*ceb súyi najd kadam sáz zi ser.*  
*sbau beh tájil ravàn cbun s'ers'er*  
*ān ceb dil bordab zi Mejnún bi nigàb*  
*beb berent zúd biyáver bembràb*  
*raft ò āvard gbulámac der hál*  
*Laili ān pádisbahi mulci jemál*

\* The reader will supply the point over s, when it stands for *sh*.

beb ghulámà digaresb sbud fermán  
 ceb tò hem:shau bi suyi dasbt raván  
 jánibi zináti árbábi jonún  
 sbemí pur nûri mob'abbat Mejnûr  
 zûd âver berem ân súkhtab rà  
 ân jigarsúzi ghem ándúkhtab rà  
 raft ò bergasht ghulámac chû nigáb  
 váliyi cishvari íshkesb hemráb  
 card úrà chû nâzar mardí ámir  
 díd zâri bi ghemi íshk ásir  
 ber feresb sbakhs'i jonún cardab vat'en  
 zakhmi bejràn bi tenesh pírâben  
 múyi ser ber bedenesb gashtab kobâ  
 múzah áz âbilahi pâ ber pâ  
 sbánab áz kbári mugbilán ber músb  
 kbirkab áz rígi biyábán ber dúsb  
 goft cáti gomshudabi vádiyi ghem  
 hícb kbwábì ceb temennát debem  
 serferázat cunam áz micnat ó jáb  
 Laili ârem biberet kbát'er kbwáb  
 goft nì nì ceb baítideft baítid  
 zerreb rá bem nazari bà khorshid  
 goft kbwábì ceb conì rást bigú  
 fâiri ân s'afb abi rokhsári nicú  
 yá nedári bijemálesh mállé  
 rást bergúyi bi jáni Laili



goft câr kodvabi árbábi cerem  
 zerrabi kbáci deret táji ferem  
 ber dilem derd zi Lailì cáfíft  
 kbwábeshi vas'l zi bí ínfáíft  
 babri kborfendiýi ín jozvi b'akír  
 bas buvad pertavì áz mibri monír  
 goft ò gârdíd súyì dasht ravân  
 didab giryân ò mizbab áshcfsíshàn

### The Translation.

1. *The man, who had inebriated himself with milk from the nipple of Anguish, who had been nourished in the lap of Affliction,*

2. MEJNU'N, mad with the bright hue and fair face of LAILÌ, himself a dark mole on the cheek of the desert,

3. Having found the way to the mansion of love, became *fixed like* the threshold on the door of love's palace.

4. Over his head the form of Madness had cast her shadow: the tale of his passion was loudly celebrated.

5. Among the *Arabs* a tumult arose on all sides: the relation of his adventures was a deffert in their assemblies.

6. A powerful Prince reigned in *Arabia*, possessing worldly magnificence and riches:

7. He had seen the depredations of Grief through absence from a beloved object: he had plucked many a black-spotted flower from *the garden of love*.

8. Even in his infancy he had felt the pain of separation: the bitter taste of that poison remained on his palate.

9. When he learned the story of that afflicted lover, he instantly gave an order to a slave,

10. *Saying*, ‘ Make thy head like thy feet in running towards *Najd*; go with celerity, like a violent wind :

11. ‘ Bring speedily with thee to my presence Her, who has stolen the heart of MEJNU’N with a glance.’

12. The stripling ran, and in a short time brought LAÏLÌ, that Empress in the dominion of beauty.

13. To another slave *the* Prince gave this order: ‘ Run thou also into the desert,

14. ‘ Go to that ornament of frantick lovers, MEJNU’N, the illumined taper of love.

15. ‘ Bring quickly before me that inflamed *youth*, that heart-consumed anguish-pierced lover.’

16. The boy went, and returned, in the twinkling of an eye, accompanied by the ruler in the territories of love.

17. When the Prince looked at him, he beheld a wretch in bondage to the misery of desire.

18. Madnefs had fixed her abode on this head: he was clothed, as with a vest, with the wounds of feperation.

19. His locks flowed, like a mantle, over his body: his only fandal was the callus of his feet.

20. In his hair ftuck a comb of *Arabian* thorns: a robe of fand from the defert covered his back.

21. ‘ O THOU, faid *the Prince*, who haft been  
‘ loft in the valley of forrow; doft thou not wifh  
‘ me to give thee the object of thy paffion,

22. ‘ To exalt thee with dignity and power,  
‘ to bring LAİLÌ before thee gratifying thy foul?’

23. ‘ No, no; answered he, far, far is it from  
‘ my wifh, that an atom fhould be feen together  
‘ with the ‘fun.’

24. ‘ Speak truly, replied the Prince, art thou  
‘ not willing to recreate thyfelf on the fmooth  
‘ plain of that beautiful cheek?

25. ‘ Or haft thou no inclination to enjoy her  
‘ charms? I adjure thee, by the foul of LAİLÌ,  
‘ to declare the truth!’

26. He rejoined: ‘ O chief of men with  
‘ generous hearts, a particle of duft from thy  
‘ gate is a diadem on my head.’

27. ' The pain of my love for LAİLİ is sufficient for my heart: a wish to enjoy her presence *thus* would be injustice.

28. ' To gratify this contemptible soul of mine, a single ray from that bright luminary would be enough.'

29. He spake, and ran towards the desert, his eye weeping, and his eye-lashes raining tears.

These couplets would fully answer the purpose of showing the method, in which *Persian* may be written according to the original characters, with some regard also to the *Isfabáni* pronunciation; but, since a very ingenious artist, named MUHAMMED GHAU'TH, has engraved a tetrastich on copper, as a specimen of his art, and since no moveable types can equal the beauty of *Persian* writing, I annex his plate\*, and add the four lines, which he has selected, in *English* letters: they are too easy to require a translation, and too insignificant to deserve it.

*Huwa'l ázíz*

*Cashmi terab'h'um zi tò dárìm mà  
keblab tóyì rù beceb ārìm mà  
b'ájati mà áz tò ber āyed temàm  
dāmenat áz caf naguzá'ìm mà.*

\* Plate VI.

## VI.

The first specimen of *Hindi*, that occurs to me, is a little *Ghazal* or love-song, in a *Choriambick* measure, written by GUNNA' BEIGUM, the wife of GHA'ZIU'LDIN KH'AN, a man of consummate abilities and consummate wickedness, who has borne an active part in the modern transactions of Upper *Hindústàn*.

هدعي همسي سنن ساز باوسي مي

اه اب کثرت داغ غم خوابسي تمام

مي ميري طرح جگر خون تيرا مدت سي

عوض درد فزي سي وه بهري بين ساري

تهمت عشق عبث کرتي بين مجهپر منت

اب تمنا کو يه مان مرده باوسي مي

صه سينه ميرا جاوه طاوسي ليا

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

چشم زخم ز تو داریم ماما  
قبله توئی رو بکہ اریم ماما

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

حاجت ما از تو بر اید تمام  
و دامنیت از کف نکذاریم ماما

کبار محمد عویث



ای حنا کسکی تجھی خواہش با بوسہ ای

جس لب زخم نی شمشیر تیری چوسے ای

ہاں بہہ سچ مانسی کی خومان سی تو تک خوسے ای

*Muddatî hemsè fokhan fâz bi fâlûsî haî  
ab tamennâ cò yebân muzbedeî mâyûsî haî  
âb ab cafrati dâgbi gbemi kbûbân sè temâm  
s'afbaî sinab mërâ jilwaî t'âûsî haî  
baî mèrî t'arab' jigar knûni t'èrà muddatsè  
à b'innâ ciscî tujbè kbwâbîshî pâbûsî haî  
âwâzî derd mezè sè wak bberè haîn sûrè  
jis lebi zakhm nè sbemsbîri t'èrî chûsî haî  
tobmati îshk âbas cartè haîn mujhper Minnat  
hân yeb fech milnè cî kbûbân sè tû tuc kbûsî haî.*

#### The Translation.

1. My beloved foe speaks of me with diffimulation; and now the tidings of despair are brought hither to the desire of my soul.

2. Alas, that the smooth surface of my bosom, through the marks of burning in the sad absence of lovely youths, is become like the plumage of a peacock.



3. Like me, O *Hinnà* (the fragrant and elegant shrub, with the leaves of which the nails of *Arabian* women are dyed crimson), thy heart has long been full of blood: whose foot art thou desirous of kissing?

4. Instead of pain, *my beloved*, every wound from thy cimeter sucks with its lips the sweetness, with which it is filled.

5. The suspicion of love is vainly cast on MINNAT—Yes; true it is, that my nature rather leads me to the company of beautiful youths.

Thus have I explained, by observations and examples, my method of noting in *Roman* letters the principal languages of *Asia*; nor can I doubt, that *Armenian*, *Turkish*, and the various dialects of *Tartary*, may be expressed in the same manner with equal advantage; but, as *Chinese* words are not written in alphabetical characters, it is obvious, that they must be noted according to the best *pronunciation* used in *China*; which has, I imagine, few sounds incapable of being rendered by the symbols used in this essay.

ON  
THE GODS OF GREECE, ITALY, AND  
INDIA,

WRITTEN IN 1784, AND SINCE REVISED,

BY

THE PRESIDENT.

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WE cannot justly conclude, by arguments preceding the proof of facts, that one idolatrous people must have borrowed their deities, rites, and tenets from another; since Gods of all shapes and dimensions may be framed by the boundless powers of imagination, or by the frauds and follies of men, in countries never connected; but, when features of resemblance, too strong to have been accidental, are observable in different systems of polytheism, without fancy or prejudice to colour them and improve the likenesses, we can scarce help believing, that some connection has immemorially subsisted between the several nations, who have adopted them: it is my design in this essay, to point out such a resemblance between the popular worship of the old *Greeks* and *Italians* and that of the *Hindus*; nor can there be room to doubt of a great simi-

larity between their strange religions and that of *Egypt, China, Persia, Phrygia, Phœnice, Syria*; to which, perhaps, we may safely add some of the southern kingdoms and even islands of *America*; while the *Gothick* system, which prevailed in the northern regions of *Europe*, was not merely similar to those of *Greece* and *Italy*, but almost the same in another dress with an embroidery of images apparently *Asiatick*. From all this, if it be satisfactorily proved, we may infer a general union or affinity between the most distinguished inhabitants of the primitive world, at the time when they deviated, as they did too early deviate, from the rational adoration of the only true GOD.

There seem to have been four principal sources of all mythology. I. Historical, or natural, truth has been perverted into fable by ignorance, imagination, flattery, or stupidity; as a king of *Crete*, whose tomb had been discovered in that island, was conceived to have been the God of *Olympus*, and *MINOS*, a legislator of that country, to have been his son, and to hold a supreme appellate jurisdiction over departed souls; hence too probably flowed the tale of *CADMUS*, as *BOCHART* learnedly traces it; hence beacons or volcanos became one-eyed giants and monsters vomiting flames; and two rocks, from their appearance to mariners in certain positions, were

supposed to crush all vessels attempting to pass between them; of which idle fictions many other instances might be collected from the *Odyssy* and the various *Argonautick* poems. The less we say of *Julian* stars, deifications of princes or warriors, altars raised, with those of *APOLLO*, to the basest of men, and divine titles bestowed on such wretches as *CAJUS OCTAVIANUS*, the less we shall expose the infamy of grave senators and fine poets, or the brutal folly of the low multitude: but we may be assured, that the mad apotheosis of truly great men, or of little men falsely called great, has been the origin of gross idolatrous errors in every part of the pagan world. II. The next source of them appears to have been a wild admiration of the heavenly bodies, and, after a time, the systems and calculations of Astronomers: hence came a considerable portion of *Egyptian* and *Grecian* fable; the *Sabian* worship in *Arabia*; the *Persian* types and emblems of *Mibr* or the sun, and the far extended adoration of the elements and the powers of nature; and hence perhaps, all the artificial Chronology of the *Chinese* and *Indians*, with the invention of demigods and heroes to fill the vacant niches in their extravagant and imaginary periods. III. Numberless divinities have been created solely by the magick of poetry; whose essential business it is, to personify

the most abstract notions, and to place a nymph or a genius in every grove and almost in every flower: hence *Hygieia* and *Jaso*, health and remedy, are the poetical daughters of ÆSCULAPIUS, who was either a distinguished physician, or medical skill personified; and hence *Cbloris*, or verdure, is married to the *Zephyr*. IV. The metaphors and allegories of moralists and metaphysicians have been also very fertile in Deities; of which a thousand examples might be adduced from PLATO, CICERO, and the inventive commentators on HOMER in their pedigrees of the Gods, and their fabulous lessons of morality: the richest and noblest stream from this abundant fountain is the charming philosophical tale of PSYCHE, or the *Progress of the Soul*; than which, to my taste, a more beautiful, sublime, and well supported allegory was never produced by the wisdom and ingenuity of man. Hence also the *Indian MA'YA'*, or, as the word is explained by some *Hindu* scholars, "the first inclination of the Godhead to diversify himself" (such is their phrase) by creating worlds," is feigned to be the mother of universal nature, and of all the inferiour Gods; as a *Cashmirian* informed me, when I asked him, why CA'MA, or *Love*, was represented as her son; but the word MA'YA', or *delusion*, has a more subtle and recondite sense in the *Védánta* philosophy,

where it signifies the system of *perceptions*, whether of secondary or of primary qualities, which the Deity was believed by EPICHRMUS, PLATO, and many truly pious men, to raise by his omnipresent spirit in the minds of his creatures, but which had not, in their opinion, any existence independent of mind.

In drawing a parallel between the Gods of the *Indian* and *European* heathens, from whatever source they were derived, I shall remember, that nothing is less favourable to enquiries after truth than a systematical spirit, and shall call to mind the saying of a *Hindu* writer, “ that who-  
 “ ever obstinately adheres to any set of opinions,  
 “ may bring himself to believe that the freshest  
 “ sandal wood is a flame of fire:” this will effectually prevent me from insisting, that such a God of *India* was *the* JUPITER of *Greece*; such, *the* APOLLO; such, *the* MERCURY: in fact, since all the causes of polytheism contributed largely to the assemblage of *Grecian* divinities (though BACON reduces them all to refined allegories, and NEWTON to a poetical disguise of true history), we find many JOVES, many APOLLOS, many MERCURIES, with distinct attributes and capacities; nor shall I presume to suggest more, than that, in one capacity or another, there exists a striking similitude between the chief objects of worship in ancient *Greece* or *Italy* and in the

very interesting country, which we now inhabit.

The comparison, which I proceed to lay before you, must needs be very superficial, partly from my short residence in *Hindustan*, partly from my want of complete leisure for literary amusements, but principally because I have no *European* book, to refresh my memory of old fables, except the conceited, though not unlearned, work of POMEY, entitled the *Pantbeon*, and that so miserably translated, that it can hardly be read with patience. A thousand more strokes of resemblance might, I am sure, be collected by any, who should with that view peruse HESIOD, HYGINUS, CORNUTUS, and the other mythologists; or, which would be a shorter and a pleasanter way, should be satisfied with the very elegant *Syntagmata* of LILIUS GIRALDUS.

Disquisitions concerning the manners and conduct of our species in early times, or indeed at any time, are always curious at least and amusing; but they are highly interesting to such, as can say of themselves with CHREMES in the play, "We are men, and take an interest in all that relates to mankind:" They may even be of solid importance in an age, when some intelligent and virtuous persons are inclined to doubt the authenticity of the accounts, delivered by MOSES, concerning the primitive world;

since no modes or sources of reasoning can be unimportant, which have a tendency to remove such doubts. Either the first eleven chapters of *Genesis*, all due allowances being made for a figurative Eastern style, are true, or the whole fabrick of our national religion is false; a conclusion, which none of us, I trust, would wish to be drawn. I, who cannot help believing the divinity of the MESSIAH, from the undisputed antiquity and manifest completion of many prophecies, especially those of ISAIAH, in the only person recorded by history, to whom they are applicable, am obliged of course to believe the sanctity of the venerable books, to which that sacred person refers as genuine; but it is not the truth of our national religion, as such, that I have at heart: it is truth itself; and, if any cool unbiaffed reasoner will clearly convince me, that MOSES drew his narrative through *Egyptian* conduits from the primeval fountains of *Indian* literature, I shall esteem him as a friend for having weeded my mind from a capital error, and promise to stand among the foremost in assisting to circulate the truth, which he has ascertained. After such a declaration, I cannot but persuade myself, that no candid man will be displeas'd, if, in the course of my work, I make as free with any arguments, that he may have advanced, as I should really desire



him to do with any of mine, that he may be disposed to controvert. Having no system of my own to maintain, I shall not pursue a very regular method, but shall take all the Gods, of whom I discourse, as they happen to present themselves; beginning, however, like the *Romans* and the *Hindus*, with JANU or GANE'SA.

The titles and attributes of this old *Italian* deity are fully comprized in two choriambick verses of SULPITIUS; and a farther account of him from OVID would here be superfluous:

*Jane pater, Jane tuens, dive biceps, biformis,  
O cate rerum fator, O principium deorum!*

“ Father JANUS, all-beholding JANUS, thou  
“ divinity with two heads, and with two forms;  
“ O sagacious planter of all things, and leader  
“ of deities!”

He was the God, we see, of *Wisdom*; whence he is represented on coins with *two*, and, on the *Hetruscan* image found at *Falisci*, with *four*, faces; emblems of prudence and circumspection; thus is GANE'SA, the God of *Wisdom* in *Hindustan*, painted with an *Elephant's* head, the symbol of sagacious discernment, and attended by a favourite *rat*, which the *Indians* consider as a wife and provident animal. His next great character (the plentiful source of many superstitious usages) was that, from which he is em-





phatically styled *the father*, and which the second verse before-cited more fully expresses, *the origin and founder of all things*: whence this notion arose, unless from a tradition that he first built shrines, raised altars, and instituted sacrifices, it is not easy to conjecture; hence it came however, that his name was invoked before any other God; that, in the old sacred rites, corn and wine, and, in later times, incense also, were first offered to JANUS; that the *doors* or *entrances* to private houses were called *Januæ*, and any pervious passage or thorough-fare, in the plural number, *Jani*, or *with two beginnings*; that he was represented holding a rod as guardian of ways, and a key, as *opening*, not gates only, but *all important works and affairs* of mankind; that he was thought to preside over the morning, or *beginning of day*; that, although the *Roman year* began regularly with *March*, yet the eleventh month, named *Januarius*, was considered as *first* of the twelve, whence the whole year was supposed to be under his guidance, and opened with great solemnity by the consuls inaugurated in his fane, where his statue was decorated on that occasion with fresh laurel; and, for the same reason, a solemn denunciation of war, than which there can hardly be a more momentous national act, was made by the military consul's opening the gates of his temple

with all the pomp of his magistracy. The twelve altars and twelve chapels of JANUS might either denote, according to the general opinion, that he leads and governs twelve months, or that, as he says of himself in OVID, all entrance and access must be made through him to the principal Gods, who were, to a proverb, of the same number. We may add, that JANUS was imagined to preside over infants at their birth, or the *beginning* of life.

The *Indian* divinity has precisely the same character: all sacrifices and religious ceremonies, all addresses even to superiour Gods, all serious compositions in writing, and all worldly affairs of moment, are begun by pious *Hindus* with an invocation of GANE'SA; a word composed of *isa*, the *governor* or *leader*, and *gan'a*, or a *company* of deities, *nine* of which companies are enumerated in the *Amarcôsb*. Instances of opening business auspiciously by an ejaculation to the JANUS of *India* (if the lines of resemblance here traced will justify me in so calling him) might be multiplied with ease. Few books are begun without the words *salutation* to GANE'S, and he is first invoked by the *Bráhmans*, who conduct the trial by ordeal, or perform the ceremony of the *bóma*, or sacrifice to fire: M. SONNERAT represents him as highly revered on the Coast of *Coromandel*; "where the *Indians*, he says,

“ would not on any account build a house, with-  
 “ out having placed on the ground an image of  
 “ this deity, which they sprinkle with oil and  
 “ adorn every day with flowers; they set up his  
 “ figure in all their temples, in the streets, in the  
 “ high roads, and in open plains at the foot of  
 “ some tree; so that persons of all ranks may in-  
 “ voke him, before they undertake any business,  
 “ and travellers worship him, before they pro-  
 “ ceed on their journey.” To this I may add,  
 from my own observation, that in the com-  
 modious and useful town, which now rises at  
*Dharmāranya* or *Gayà*, under the auspices of the  
 active and benevolent THOMAS LAW, Esq. col-  
 lector of *Rotas*, every new-built house, agree-  
 ably to an immemorial usage of the *Hindus*, has  
 the name of GANE'SA superscribed on its door;  
 and, in the old town, his image is placed over  
 the gates of the temples.

*No evidence  
 that Janes  
 & Ganessa  
 the same.*

We come now to SATURN, the oldest of the  
 pagan Gods, of whose office and actions much is  
 recorded. The jargon of his being the son of  
 Earth and of Heaven, who was the son of the  
 Sky and the Day, is purely a confession of ig-  
 norance, who were his parents or who his pre-  
 decessors; and there appears more sense in the  
 tradition said to be mentioned by the inquisitive  
 and well informed PLATO, “ that both SA-  
 “ TURN or *time*, and his consort CYBELE, or

“ the *Earth*, together with their attendants, were  
 “ the children of *Ocean* and *THE TITIS*, or, in less  
 “ poetical language sprang from the waters of the  
 “ great deep.” *CEREES*, the goddesses of harvests,  
 was, it seems, their daughter; and *VIRGIL* de-  
 scribes “ the mother and nurse of all as crown-  
 “ ed with turrets, in a car drawn by lions, and  
 “ exulting in her hundred grandsons, all divine,  
 “ all inhabiting splendid celestial mansions.” As  
 the God of time, or rather as *time* itself per-  
 sonified, *SATURN* was usually painted by the  
 heathens holding a scythe in one hand, and, in  
 the other, a snake with its tail in its mouth, the  
 symbol of perpetual cycles and revolutions of  
 ages: he was often represented in the act of de-  
 vouring years, in the form of children, and,  
 sometimes, encircled by the seasons appearing  
 like boys and girls. By the *Latins* he was  
 named *SATURNUS*; and the most ingenious ety-  
 mology of that word is given by *FESTUS* the  
 grammarian; who traces it, by a learned analogy  
 to many similar names, *à satu*, from planting,  
 because, when he reigned in *Italy*, he introduced  
 and improved agriculture: but his distinguish-  
 ing character, which explains, indeed, all his  
 other titles and functions, was expressed alle-  
 gorically by the stern of a ship or galley on the  
 reverse of his ancient coins; for which *OVID*  
 assigns a very unsatisfactory reason, “ because

“ the divine stranger arrived in a ship on the “ *Italian* coast ;” as if he could have been expected on horse-back or hovering through the air.

The account, quoted by POMEY from ALEXANDER POLYHISTOR, casts a clearer light, if it really came from genuine antiquity, on the whole tale of SATURN ; “ that he predicted an extraordinary fall of rain, and ordered the construction of a vessel, in which it was necessary to secure men, beasts, birds, and reptiles from a general inundation.”

Now it seems not easy to take a cool review of all these testimonies concerning the birth, kindred, offspring, character, occupations, and entire life of SATURN, without assenting to the opinion of BOCHART, or admitting it at least to be highly probable, that the fable was raised on the true history of NOAH ; from whose flood a new period of *time* was computed, and a new series of ages may be said to have sprung ; who rose fresh, and, as it were, newly born from the waves ; whose wife was in fact the universal mother, and, that the earth might soon be re-peopled, was early blessed with numerous and flourishing descendants : if we produce, therefore, an *Indian* king of divine birth, eminent for his piety and beneficence, whose story seems evidently to be that of NOAH disguised by *Asia-*



tick fiction, we may safely offer a conjecture, that he was also the same personage with SATURN. This was MENU, or SATYAVRATA, whose patronymick name was VAIVASWATA, or child of the SUN; and whom the *Indians* believed to have reigned over the whole world in the earliest age of their chronology, but to have resided in the country of *Dravira*, on the coast of the Eastern *Indian* Peninsula: the following narrative of the principal event in his life I have literally translated from the *Bhágavat*; and it is the subject of the first *Purána*, entitled that of the *Matfya*, or *Fish*.

‘ Desiring the preservation of herds, and of  
 ‘ *Bráhmans*, of genii and virtuous men, of the  
 ‘ *Védas*, of law, and of precious things, the lord  
 ‘ of the universe assumes many bodily shapes;  
 ‘ but, though he pervades, like the air, a va-  
 ‘ riety of beings, yet he is himself unvaried,  
 ‘ since he has no quality subject to change.  
 ‘ At the close of the last *Calpa*, there was a  
 ‘ general destruction occasioned by the sleep of  
 ‘ BRAHMA; whence his creatures in different  
 ‘ worlds were drowned in a vast ocean. BRAH-  
 ‘ MA, being inclined to slumber, desiring repose  
 ‘ after a lapse of ages, the strong demon HAYA-  
 ‘ GRIVA came near him, and stole the *Védas*,  
 ‘ which had flowed from his lips. When HERI,  
 ‘ the preserver of the universe, discovered this

‘ deed of the Prince of *Dánavas*, he took the  
 ‘ shape of a minute fish, called *sap’bari*. A  
 ‘ holy king, named SATYAVRATA, then reigned;  
 ‘ a servant of the spirit, which moved on the  
 ‘ waves, and so devout, that water was his only  
 ‘ sustenance. He was the child of the Sun,  
 ‘ and, in the present *Calpa*, is invested by NA-  
 ‘ RA’YAN in the office of *Menu*, by the name of  
 ‘ SRA’DDHADE’VA, or the God of Obsequies.  
 ‘ One day, as he was making a libation in the  
 ‘ river *Cṛitamālā*, and held water in the palm  
 ‘ of his hand, he perceived a small fish moving  
 ‘ in it. The king of *Dravira* immediately  
 ‘ dropped the fish into the river together with  
 ‘ the water, which he had taken from it; when  
 ‘ the *sap’bari* thus pathetically addressed the be-  
 ‘ nevolent monarch: “How canst thou, O  
 ‘ king, who showest affection to the oppressed,  
 ‘ leave me in this river-water, where I am too  
 ‘ weak to resist the monsters of the stream,  
 ‘ who fill me with dread?” He, not knowing  
 ‘ who had assumed the form of a fish, applied  
 ‘ his mind to the preservation of the *sap’bari*,  
 ‘ both from good nature and from regard to his  
 ‘ own soul; and, having heard its very suppliant  
 ‘ address, he kindly placed it under his pro-  
 ‘ tection in a small vase full of water; but, in a  
 ‘ single night, its bulk was so increased, that it  
 ‘ could not be contained in the jar, and thus

‘ again addressed the illustrious Prince : “ I am  
 “ not pleased with living miserably in this little  
 “ vase ; make me a large mansion, where I may  
 “ dwell in comfort.” The king, removing it  
 ‘ thence, placed it in the water of a cistern ; but  
 ‘ it grew three cubits in less than fifty minutes,  
 ‘ and said : “ O king, it pleases me not to stay  
 “ vainly in this narrow cistern : since thou hast  
 “ granted me an asylum, give me a spacious  
 “ habitation.” He then removed it, and placed  
 ‘ it in a pool, where, having ample space around  
 ‘ its body, it became a fish of considerable size.  
 “ This abode, O king, is not convenient for me,  
 “ who must swim at large in the waters : exert  
 “ thyself for my safety ; and remove me to a  
 “ deep lake :” Thus addressed, the pious mo-  
 ‘ narch threw the suppliant into a lake, and,  
 ‘ when it grew of equal bulk with that piece of  
 ‘ water, he cast the vast fish into the sea. When  
 ‘ the fish was thrown into the waves, he thus  
 ‘ again spoke to SATYAVRATA : “ here the  
 “ horned sharks, and other monsters of great  
 “ strength will devour me ; thou shouldst not,  
 “ O valiant man, leave me in this ocean.” Thus  
 ‘ repeatedly deluded by the fish, who had ad-  
 ‘ dressed him with gentle words, the king said :  
 “ who art thou, that beguilest me in that assumed  
 “ shape ? Never before have I seen or heard of  
 “ so prodigious an inhabitant of the waters, who,

“ like thee, hast filled up, in a single day, a lake  
“ an hundred leagues in circumference. Surely,  
“ thou art BHAGAVAT, who appearest before  
“ me; the great HERI, whose dwelling was on  
“ the waves; and who now, in compaffion to thy  
“ fervants, bearest the form of the natives of the  
“ deep. Salutation and praise to thee, O first  
“ male, the lord of creation, of preservation, of  
“ destruction! Thou art the highest object, O  
“ supreme ruler, of us thy adorers, who piously  
“ seek thee. All thy delusive descents in this  
“ world give existence to various beings: yet I  
“ am anxious to know, for what cause that shape  
“ has been assumed by thee. Let me not, O  
“ lotos-eyed, approach in vain the feet of a  
“ deity, whose perfect benevolence has been ex-  
“ tended to all; when thou hast shewn us to  
“ our amazement the appearance of other bodies  
“ not in reality existing, but successively ex-  
“ hibited.” The lord of the universe, loving  
“ the pious man, who thus implored him, and  
“ intending to preserve him from the sea of de-  
“ struction, caused by the depravity of the age,  
“ thus told him how he was to act. “ In seven  
“ days from the present time, O thou tamer of  
“ enemies, the three worlds will be plunged in  
“ an ocean of death; but, in the midst of the  
“ destroying waves, a large vessel, sent by me  
“ for thy use, shall stand before thee. Then

" shalt thou take all medicinal herbs, all the va-  
 " riety of feeds; and, accompanied by seven  
 " Saints, encircled by pairs of all brute animals,  
 " thou shalt enter the spacious ark and continue  
 " in it, secure from the flood on one immense  
 " ocean without light, except the radiance of thy  
 " holy companions. When the ship shall be  
 " agitated by an impetuous wind, thou shalt  
 " fasten it with a large sea-serpent on my horn;  
 " for I will be near thee: drawing the vessel,  
 " with thee and thy attendants, I will remain on  
 " the ocean, O chief of men, until a night of  
 " BRAHMA' shall be completely ended. Thou  
 " shalt then know my true greatness, rightly  
 " named the supreme Godhead; by my favour,  
 " all thy questions shall be answered, and thy  
 " mind abundantly instructed." HERI, having  
 ' thus directed the monarch, disappeared; and  
 ' SATYAVRATA humbly waited for the time,  
 ' which the ruler of our senses had appointed.  
 ' The pious king, having scattered towards the  
 ' East the pointed blades of the grass *darbha*, and  
 ' turning his face towards the North, fate me-  
 ' ditating on the feet of the God, who had borne  
 ' the form of a fish. The sea, overwhelming its  
 ' shores, deluged the whole earth; and it was  
 ' soon perceived to be augmented by showers  
 ' from immense clouds. He, still meditating on  
 ' the command of BHAGAVAT, saw the vessel

‘advancing, and entered it with the chiefs of  
 ‘ *Bráhmans*, having carried into it the medicinal  
 ‘ creepers and conformed to the directions of  
 ‘ *HERI*. The faints thus addressed him: “ O  
 ‘ king, meditate on *CÉSAVA*; who will, surely,  
 ‘ deliver us from this danger, and grant us prof-  
 ‘ perity.” The God, being invoked by the  
 ‘ monarch, appeared again distinctly on the vast  
 ‘ ocean in the form of a fish, blazing like gold,  
 ‘ extending a million of leagues, with one stu-  
 ‘ pendous horn; on which the king, as he had  
 ‘ before been commanded by *HERI*, tied the ship  
 ‘ with a cable made of a vast serpent, and, happy  
 ‘ in his preservation, stood praising the destroyer  
 ‘ of *MADHU*. When the monarch had finished  
 ‘ his hymn, the primeval male, *BHAGAVAT*,  
 ‘ who watched for his safety on the great ex-  
 ‘ panse of water, spoke aloud to his own divine  
 ‘ essence, pronouncing a sacred *Purána*, which  
 ‘ contained the rules of the *Sánc’kya* philosophy:  
 ‘ but it was an infinite mystery to be concealed  
 ‘ within the breast of *SATYAVRATA*; who, fit-  
 ‘ ting in the vessel with the faints, heard the  
 ‘ principle of the soul, the Eternal Being, pro-  
 ‘ claimed by the preserving power. Then *HERI*,  
 ‘ rising together with *BRAHMA*, from the de-  
 ‘ structive deluge, which was abated, slew the  
 ‘ demon *HAYAGRIVA*, and recovered the sacred  
 ‘ books. *SATYAVRATA*, instructed in all divine

‘ and human knowledge, was appointed in the  
 ‘ present *Calpa*, by the favour of VISHNU, the  
 ‘ seventh MENU, surnamed VAIVASWATA : but  
 ‘ the appearance of a horned fish to the religious  
 ‘ monarch was *Máyá*, or delusion ; and he, who  
 ‘ shall devoutly hear this important allegorical  
 ‘ narrative, will be delivered from the bondage  
 ‘ of sin.’

This epitome of the first *Indian* History, that is now extant, appears to me very curious and very important ; for the story, though whimsically dressed up in the form of an allegory, seems to prove a primeval tradition in this country of the *universal deluge* described by MOSES, and fixes consequently the *time*, when the genuine *Hindu* Chronology actually begins. We find, it is true, in the *Purán*, from which the narrative is extracted, *another deluge* which happened towards the close of the *third* age, when YUDHIST’HIR was labouring under the persecution of his inveterate foe DURYO’DHAN, and when CRISHNA, who had recently become incarnate for the purpose of succouring the pious and of destroying the wicked, was performing wonders in the country of *Mat’burà* ; but the second flood was merely *local* and intended only to affect the people of *Vraja* : they, it seems, had offended INDRA, the God of the firmament, by their enthusiastick adoration of the wonderful child,

“ who lifted up the mountain *Góverdhena*, as if  
“ it had been a flower, and, by sheltering all the  
“ herdsmen and shepherdesses from the storm,  
“ convinced *INDRA* of his supremacy.” That  
the *Satya*, or (if we may venture so to call it)  
the *Saturnian*, age was in truth the age of the  
*general* flood, will appear from a close ex-  
amination of the ten *Avatárs*, or *Descents*, of the  
deity in his capacity of preserver; since of the  
four, which are declared to have happened in  
the *Satya yug*, the *three first* apparently relate to  
some stupendous convulsion of our globe from  
the fountains of the deep, and the fourth exhibits  
the miraculous punishment of pride and impiety:  
first, as we have shown, there was, in the opinion  
of the *Hindus*, an interposition of Providence to  
preserve a devout person and his family (for all  
the *Pandits* agree, that his wife, though not  
named, must be understood to have been saved  
with him) from an inundation, by which all the  
wicked were destroyed; next, the power of the  
deity descends in the form of a *Boar*, the symbol  
of strength, to draw up and support on his tusks  
the whole earth, which had been sunk beneath  
the ocean; thirdly, the same power is repre-  
sented as a *tortoise* sustaining the globe, which  
had been convulsed by the violent assaults of de-  
mons, while the Gods churned the sea with the  
mountain *Mandar*, and forced it to disgorge the



sacred things and animals, together with the water of life, which it had swallowed: these three stories relate, I think, to the same event, shadowed by a moral, a metaphysical, and an astronomical, allegory; and all three seem connected with the hieroglyphical sculptures of the old *Egyptians*. The fourth *Avatár* was a lion issuing from a bursting column of marble to devour a blaspheming monarch, who would otherwise have slain his religious son; and of the remaining six, not one has the least relation to a deluge: the three, which are ascribed to the *Trétáyug*, when tyranny and irreligion are said to have been introduced, were ordained for the overthrow of Tyrants, or, their natural types, Giants with a thousand arms formed for the most extensive oppression; and, in the *Dwáparyug*, the incarnation of CRISHNA was partly for a similar purpose, and partly with a view to thin the world of unjust and impious men, who had multiplied in that age, and began to swarm on the approach of the *Caliyug*, or the age of contention and baseness. As to BUDDHA, he seems to have been a reformer of the doctrines contained in the *Védas*; and, though his good nature led him to censure those ancient books, because they enjoined sacrifices of cattle, yet he is admitted as the ninth *Avatár* even by the *Bráhmans* of *Cási*, and his praises are sung by the

poet JAYADE'VA: his character is in many respects very extraordinary; but, as an account of it belongs rather to History than to Mythology, it is reserved for another dissertation. The tenth *Avatár*, we are told, is yet to come, and is expected to appear mounted (like the crowned conqueror in the *Apocalyps*) on a white horse, with a cimeter blazing like a comet to mow down all incorrigible and impenitent offenders, who shall then be on earth.

These four *Yugs* have so apparent an affinity with the *Grecian* and *Roman* ages, that one origin may be naturally assigned to both systems: the first in both is distinguished as abounding in *gold*, though *Satya* mean *truth* and *probity*, which were found, if ever, in the times immediately following so tremendous an exertion of the divine power as the destruction of mankind by a general deluge; the next is characterized by *silver*, and the third, by *copper*; though their usual names allude to proportions imagined in each between vice and virtue: the present, or *earthen*, age seems more properly discriminated than by *iron*, as in ancient *Europe*; since that metal is not baser or less useful, though more common in our times and consequently less precious, than copper; while mere *earth* conveys an idea of the lowest degradation. We may here observe, that the true History of the

World seems obviously dividible into *four* ages or periods; which may be called, first, the *Diluvian*, or purest age; namely, the times preceding the deluge, and those succeeding it till the mad introduction of idolatry at *Babel*; next, the *Patriarchal*, or pure, age; in which, indeed, there were mighty hunters of beasts and of men, from the rise of patriarchs in the family of SEM to the simultaneous establishment of great Empires by the descendants of his brother HA'M; thirdly, the *Mosaick*, or less pure, age; from the legation of MOSES, and during the time, when his ordinances were comparatively well-observed and uncorrupted; lastly, the *Prophetical*, or *impure*, age, beginning with the vehement warnings given by the Prophets to apostate Kings and degenerate nations, but still subsisting and to subsist, until all genuine prophecies shall be fully accomplished. The duration of the Historical ages must needs be very unequal and disproportionate; while that of the *Indian Yugs* is disposed so regularly and artificially, that it cannot be admitted as natural or probable: men do not become reprobate in a geometrical progression or at the termination of regular periods; yet so well-proportioned are the *Yugs*, that even the length of human life is diminished, as they advance, from an hundred thousand years in a subdecuple ratio; and, as the number of principal

*Avatars* in each decreases arithmetically from four, so the number of years in each decreases geometrically, and all together constitute the extravagant sum of four million three hundred and twenty thousand years, which aggregate, multiplied by seventy-one, is the period, in which every MENU is believed to preside over the world. Such a period, one might conceive, would have satisfied ARCHYTAS, the *measurer of sea and earth and the numberer of their sands*, or ARCHIMEDES, who invented a notation, that was capable of expressing the number of them; but the comprehensive mind of an *Indian Chronologist* has no limits; and the reigns of fourteen MENUS are only a single day of BRAHMA', fifty of which days have elapsed, according to the *Hindus*, from the time of the Creation: that all this puerility, as it seems at first view, may be only an astronomical riddle, and allude to the apparent revolution of the fixed stars, of which the *Bráhmans* made a mystery, I readily admit, and am even inclined to believe; but so technical an arrangement excludes all idea of serious History. I am sensible, how much these remarks will offend the warm advocates for *Indian antiquity*; but we must not sacrifice truth to a base fear of giving offence: that the *Védas* were actually written before the flood, I shall never believe; nor can we infer from the preceding

story, that the learned *Hindus* believe it ; for the allegorical slumber of BRAHMA' and the theft of the sacred books mean only, in simpler language, that *the human race was become corrupt* ; but that the *Védas* are very ancient, and far older than other *Sanscrit* compositions, I will venture to assert from my own examination of them, and a comparison of their style with that of the *Puráns* and the *Dherma Sástra*. A similar comparison justifies me in pronouncing, that the excellent law-book ascribed to SWA'YAMBHUVAMENU, though not even pretended to have been written by him, is more ancient than the BHA'GAVAT ; but that it was composed in the first age of the world, the *Bráhmans* would find it hard to persuade me ; and the date, which has been assigned to it, does not appear in either of the two copies, which I possess, or in any other, that has been collated for me : in fact the supposed date is comprized in a verse, which flatly contradicts the work itself ; for it was not MENU who composed the system of law, by the command of his father BRAHMA', but a holy personage or demigod, named BHRI-GU, who revealed to men what MENU had delivered at the request of him and other faints or patriarchs. In the *Mánava Sástra*, to conclude this digression, the measure is so uniform and melodious, and the style so perfectly *Sanscrit*,

or *polished*, that the book must be more modern than the scriptures of MOSES, in which the simplicity, or rather nakedness, of the *Hebrew* dialect, metre, and style, must convince every unbiassed man of their superior antiquity.

I leave etymologists, who decide every thing, to decide whether the word MENU, or, in the nominative case, MENUS, has any connexion with MINOS, the Lawgiver, and supposed son of JOVE: the *Cretans*, according to DIODORUS of *Sicily*, used to feign, that most of the great men, who had been deified, in return for the benefits which they had conferred on mankind, were born in their island; and hence a doubt may be raised, whether MINOS was really a *Cretan*. The *Indian* legislator was the first, not the seventh, MENU, or SATYAVRATA, whom I suppose to be the SATURN of *Italy*: part of SATURN'S character, indeed, was that of a great lawgiver,

Qui genus indocile ac dispersum montibus altis  
Composuit, *legesque* dedit,

and, we may suspect, that all the fourteen MENUS are reducible to one, who was called NUH by the *Arabs*, and probably by the *Hebrews*, though we have disguised his name by an improper pronunciation of it. Some near relation between the seventh MENU and the *Grecian*

MINOS may be inferred from the singular character of the *Hindu* God, YAMA, who was also a child of the Sun, and thence named VAIVASWATA : he had too the same title with his brother, SRA'DDHADÉVA ; another of his titles was DHERMARAJA, or *King of Justice* ; and a third, PITRIPETI, or *Lord of the Patriarchs* ; but he is chiefly distinguished as *judge of departed souls* ; for the *Hindus* believe, that, when a soul leaves its body, it immediately repairs to *Yama-pur*, or the city of YAMA, where it receives a just sentence from him, and either ascends to *Swerga*, or the first heaven, or is driven down to *Narac*, the region of serpents, or assumes on earth the form of some animal, unless its offence had been such, that it ought to be condemned to a vegetable, or even to a mineral, prison. Another of his names is very remarkable : I mean that of CA'LA, or *time*, the idea of which is intimately blended with the characters of SATURN and of NOAH ; for the name CRONOS has a manifest affinity with the word *chronos*, and a learned follower of ZERA'TUSHT assures me, that, in the books which the *Bebdins* hold sacred, mention is made of an *universal inundation*, there named the deluge of TIME.

It having been occasionally observed, that CERES was the poetical daughter of SATURN, we cannot close this head without adding, that

the *Hindus* also have their *Goddeſs of Abundance*, whom they uſually call LACSHMI', and whom they conſider as the daughter (not of MENU, but) of BHRIGU, by whom the firſt Code of ſacred ordinances was promulgated: ſhe is alſo named PEDMA' and CAMALA' from the ſacred Lotos or *Nymphaea*; but her moſt remarkable name is SRI', or, in the firſt caſe, SRI'S, which has a reſemblance to the *Latin*, and means *fortune* or *proſperity*. It may be contended, that, although LACSHMI' may be figuratively called the CERES of *Hinduſtan*, yet any two or more idolatrous nations, who ſubſiſted by agriculture, might naturally conceive a Deity to preſide over their labours, without having the leaſt intercourſe with each other; but no reaſon appears, why two nations ſhould concur in ſuppoſing that Deity to be a female: one at leaſt of them would be more likely to imagine, that the *Earth* was a Goddeſs, and that the God of abundance rendered her fertile. Beſides, in very ancient temples near *Gayá*, we ſee images of LACSHMI', with full breaſts and a *cord* twiſted under her arm like a *horn of plenty*, which look very much like the old *Grecian* and *Roman* figures of CERES.

The fable of SATURN having been thus analysed, let us proceed to his deſcendents; and begin, as the Poet adviſes, with JUPITER, whoſe



supremacy, thunder, and libertinism every boy learns from OVID; while his great offices of Creator, Preserver, and Destroyer, are not generally considered in the systems of *European* mythology. The *Romans* had, as we have before observed, many JUPITERS, one of whom was only the *Firmament* personified, as ENNIUS clearly expresses it :

Aspice hoc sublime candens, quem invocant omnes *Jovem*.

This JUPITER or DIESPITER is the *Indian* God of the visible heavens, called INDRA, or the *King*, and DIVESPETER, or *Lord of the Sky*, who has also the character of the *Roman* GENIUS, or Chief of the good spirits; but most of his epithets in *Sanscrit* are the same with those of the *Ennian* JOVE. His consort is named SACHI'; his celestial city, *Amaravatì*; his palace, *Vaijayanta*; his garden, *Nandana*; his chief elephant, *Airavat*; his charioteer, MA-TALI; and his weapon, *Vajra*, or the thunderbolt: he is the regent of winds and showers, and, though the East is peculiarly under his care, yet his *Olympus* is *Mèru*, or the north pole allegorically represented as a mountain of gold and gems. With all his power he is considered as a subordinate Deity, and far inferior to the *Indian* Triad, BRAHMA', VISHNU, and MA-HA'DEVA or SIVA, who are three *forms* of one





and the same Godhead: thus the principal divinity of the *Greeks* and *Latins*, whom they called ZEUS and JUPITER, with irregular inflexions DIOS and JOVIS, was not merely *Fulminator*, the Thunderer, but, like the destroying power of *India*, MAGNUS DIVUS, ULTOR, GENITOR; like the preserving power, CONSERVATOR, SOTER, OPITULUS, ALTOR, RUMINUS, and, like the creating power, the *Giver of Life*; an attribute, which I mention here on the authority of CORNUTUS, a consummate master of mythological learning. We are advised by PLATO himself to search for the roots of *Greek* words in some barbarous, that is, foreign, soil; but, since I look upon etymological conjectures as a weak basis for historical inquiries, I hardly dare suggest, that ZEV, SIV, and JOV, are the same syllable differently pronounced: it must, however be admitted, that the *Greeks* having no palatial *sigma*, like that of the *Indians*, might have expressed it by their *zeta*, and that the initial letters of *zugon* and *jugum* are (as the instance proves) easily interchangeable.

Let us now descend, from these general and introductory remarks, to some particular observations on the resemblance of ZEUS or JUPITER to the triple divinity VISHNU, SIVA, BRAHMA'; for that is the order, in which they are expressed by the letters A, U, and M, which coalesce and

form the mystical word O'M; a word, which never escapèd the lips of a pious *Hindu*, who meditates on it in silence: whether the *Egyptian* ON, which is commonly supposed to mean the Sun, be the *Sanscrit* monosyllable, I leave others to determine. It must always be remembered, that the learned *Indians*, as they are instructed by their own books, in truth acknowledge only One Supreme Being, whom they call BRAHME, OR THE GREAT ONE in the neuter gender: they believe his Essence to be infinitely removed from the comprehension of any mind but his own; and they suppose him to manifest his power by the operation of his divine spirit, whom they name VISHNU, the *Pervader*, and NA'RA'YAN, or *Moving on the waters*, both in the masculine gender, whence he is often denominated the *First Male*; and by this power they believe, that the whole order of nature is preserved and supported; but the *Védántis*, unable to form a distinct idea of brute matter independent of mind, or to conceive that the work of Supreme Goodness was left a moment to itself, imagine that the Deity is ever present to his work, and constantly supports a series of perceptions, which, in one sense, they call *illusory*, though they cannot but admit the *reality* of all created forms, as far as the happiness of creatures can be affected by them. When they consider the divine power





exerted in *creating*, or in giving existence to that which existed not before, they call the deity BRAMA' in the masculine gender also; and, when they view him in the light of *Destroyer*, or rather *Changer* of forms, they give him a thousand names, of which SIVA, ÍSA, or ÍSWARA, RUDRA, HARA, SAMBHU, and MAHA'DÉVA or MAHE'SA, are the most common. The first operations of these three *Powers* are variously described in the different *Purána's* by a number of allegories, and from them we may deduce the *Ionian Philosophy of primeval water*, the doctrine of the Mundane Egg, and the veneration paid to the *Nymphæa*, or *Lotos*, which was anciently revered in *Egypt*, as it is at present in *Hindustán*, *Tibet*, and *Népal*: the *Tibetians* are said to embellish their temples and altars with it, and a native of *Népal* made prostrations before it on entering my study, where the fine plant and beautiful flowers lay for examination. Mr. HOLWEL, in explaining his first plate, supposes BRAHMA' to be floating on a leaf of *betel* in the midst of the abyss; but it was manifestly intended by a bad painter for a lotos-leaf, or for that of the *Indian fig-tree*; nor is the species of pepper, known in *Bengal* by the name of *Támbúla*, and on the Coast of *Malabar* by that of *betel*, held sacred, as he asserts, by the *Hindus*, or necessarily cultivated under the inspection of *Bráhmans*; though, as



the vines are tender, all the plantations of them are carefully secured, and ought to be cultivated by a particular tribe of *Súdras*, who are thence called *T'ámbuli's*.

That *water* was the primitive element and first work of the Creative Power, is the uniform opinion of the *Indian* Philosophers; but, as they give so particular an account of the general deluge and of the Creation, it can never be admitted, that their whole system arose from traditions concerning the flood only, and must appear indubitable, that their doctrine is in part borrowed from the opening of *Birásit* or *Genesis*, than which a sublimer passage, from the first word to the last, never flowed or will flow from any human pen: “*In the beginning* GOD created the  
“ heavens and the earth.—And the earth was  
“ void and waste, and darkness was on the face  
“ of the deep, and the spirit of GOD *moved upon*  
“ the face of the waters; and GOD said: *Let*  
“ *Light be*—and *Light was.*” The sublimity of this passage is considerably diminished by the *Indian* paraphrase of it, with which MENU, the son of BRAHMA', begins his address to the sages, who consulted him on the formation of the universe: “ This world, says he, was all darkness,  
“ undiscernible, undistinguishable, altogether as  
“ in a profound sleep; till the self-existent in-  
“ visible GOD, making it manifest with five ele-





“ ments and other glorious forms, perfectly dif-  
 “ pelled the gloom. He, desiring to raise up  
 “ various creatures by an emanation from his  
 “ own glory, first created the *waters*, and im-  
 “ pressed them with a power of motion : by that  
 “ power was produced a golden Egg, blazing  
 “ like a thousand suns, in which was born  
 “ BRAHMA', self-existing, the great parent of all  
 “ rational beings. The waters are called *nárà*,  
 “ since they are the offspring of NERA (or I'S-  
 “ WARA ; and thence was NA'RA'YANA named,  
 “ because his first *ayana*, or *moving*, was on  
 “ them.

“ THAT WHICH IS, the invifible caufe, eter-  
 “ nal, self-existing, but unperceived, becoming  
 “ mafculine *from neuter*, is celebrated among all  
 “ creatures by the name of BRAHMA'. That  
 “ God, having dwelled in the Egg, through re-  
 “ volving years, Himfelf meditating on Himfelf,  
 “ divided it into two equal parts ; and from  
 “ thofe halves formed the heavens and the earth,  
 “ placing in the midft the fubtil ether, the eight  
 “ points of the world, and the permanent recep-  
 “ tacle of waters.”

To this curious description, with which the  
*Mánava Sástra* begins, I cannot refrain from  
 fubjoining the four verfes, which are the text of  
 the *Bbágavat*, and are believed to have been pro-  
 nounced by the Supreme Being to BRAHMA' :

the following version is most scrupulously literal\*.

“ Even I was even at first, not any other thing ; that, which exists, unperceived ; supreme : afterwards I AM THAT WHICH IS ; and he, who must remain, am I.

“ Except the FIRST CAUSE, whatever may appear, and may not appear, in the mind, know that to be the mind's MA'YA' (or *Delusion*), as light, as darkness.

“ As the great elements are in various beings, entering, yet not entering (that is, pervading, not destroying), thus am I in them, yet not in them.

“ Even thus far may inquiry be made by him, who seeks to know the principle of mind, in union and separation, which must be EVERY WHERE ALWAYS.”

Wild and obscure as these ancient verses must appear in a naked verbal translation, it will perhaps be thought by many, that the poetry or mythology of *Greece* or *Italy* afford no conceptions more awfully magnificent : yet the brevity and simplicity of the *Mosaick* diction are unequalled.

As to the creation of the world, in the opinion of the *Romans*, OVID, who might naturally have been expected to describe it with learning and

\* See the Original, p. 394. Plate IV.





elegance, leaves us wholly in the dark, *which of the Gods was the actor in it*: other Mythologists are more explicit; and we may rely on the authority of CORNUTUS, that the old *European* heathens considered JOVE (not the son of SATURN, but of the *Ether*, that is of an unknown parent) as the great *Life-giver*, and *Father of Gods and men*; to which may be added the *Orphic* doctrine, preserved by PROCLUS, that “the abyss and empyreum, the earth and sea, the Gods and Goddeses, were produced by ZEUS or JUPITER.” In this character he corresponds with BRAHMA'; and, perhaps, with that God of the *Babylonians* (if we can rely on the accounts of their ancient religion), who, like BRAHMA', reduced the universe to order, and, like BRAHMA', *lost his head*, with the blood of which new animals were instantly formed: I allude to the common story, the meaning of which I cannot discover, that BRAHMA' had five heads till one of them was cut off by NA'RA'YA'N.

That, in another capacity, JOVE was the *Helper and Supporter* of all, we may collect from his old *Latin* epithets, and from CICERO, who informs us, that his usual name is a contraction of *Juvans Paer*; an etymology, which shows the idea entertained of his character, though we may have some doubt of its accuracy. CALLI-



MACHUS, we know, addresses him as *the bestower of all good, and of security from grief*; and, *since neither wealth without virtue, nor virtue without wealth, give complete happiness*, he prays, like a wise poet, for both. An *Indian* prayer for riches would be directed to LACSHMI', the wife of VISHNU, since the *Hindu* Goddesses are believed to be the *powers* of their respective lords: as to CUVÉRA, the *Indian* PLUTUS, one of whose names is *Paulastya*, he is revered, indeed, as a magnificent Deity, residing in the palace of *Alacá*, or borne through the sky in a splendid car named *Pushpaca*, but is manifestly subordinate, like the other seven Genii, to the three principal Gods, or rather to the principal God considered in three capacities. As the soul of the world, or the pervading *mind*, so finely described by VIRGIL, we see Jove represented by several *Roman* poets; and with great sublimity by LUCAN in the known speech of CATO concerning the *Ammonian* oracle, "JUPITER is, "wherever we look, wherever we move." This is precisely the *Indian* idea of VISHNU, according to the four verses above exhibited, not that the *Bráhmans* imagine their *mæ* Divinity to be the *divine Essence* of the great one, which they declare to be wholly incomprehensible; but, since the power of *preserving* created things by a superintending providence, belongs emi-

nently to the Godhead, they hold that power to exist transcendently in the *preserving* member of the Triad, whom they suppose to be EVERY WHERE ALWAYS, not in substance, but in spirit and energy: here, however, I speak of the *Vaiṣṇava's*; for the *Saiva's* ascribe a sort of pre-eminence to SIVA, whose attributes are now to be concisely examined.

It was in the capacity of Avenger and Destroyer, that Jove encountered and overthrew the *Titans* and Giants, whom TYPHON, BRIAREUS, TITUS, and the rest of their fraternity, led against the God of *Olympus*; to whom an Eagle brought *lightning* and *thunderbolts* during the warfare: thus, in a similar contest between SIVA and the *Daityas*, or children of DITI, who frequently rebelled against heaven, BRAHMA is believed to have presented the God of Destruction with *fiery shafts*. One of the many poems, entitled *Rámáyan*, the last book of which has been translated into *Italian*, contains an extraordinary dialogue between the crow *Bhusbunda*, and a rational Eagle, named GARUDA, who is often painted with the face of a beautiful youth, and the body of an imaginary bird; and one of the eighteen *Puránas* bears his name and comprizes his whole history. M. SONNERAT informs us, that VISHNU is represented in some places riding on the GARUDA, which he sup-

poses to be the *Pondicheri* Eagle of BRISSON, especially as the *Bráhmans* of the Coast highly venerate that class of birds, and provide food for numbers of them at stated hours: I rather conceive the *Garúda* to be a fabulous bird, but agree with him, that the *Hindu* God, who rides on it, resembles the ancient JUPITER. In the old temples at *Gayà*, VISHNU is either mounted on this poetical bird or attended by it together with a little page; but, lest an etymologist should find GANYMED in GARUD, I must observe that the *Sanscrit* word is pronounced *Garura*; though I admit, that the *Grecian* and *Indian* stories of the celestial bird and the page appear to have some resemblance. As the *Olympian* JUPITER fixed his Court and held his Councils on a lofty and brilliant mountain, so the appropriated feat of MAHA'DE'VA, whom the *Saiva's* consider as the Chief of the Deities, was mount *Cailása*, every splinter of whose rocks was an inestimable gem: his terrestrial haunts are the snowy hills of *Himálaya*, or that branch of them to the East of the *Brámaputra*, which has the name of *Chandrasic'bara*, or the *Mountain of the Moon*. When, after all these circumstances, we learn that SIVA is believed to have *three* eyes, whence he is named also TRILO'CHAN, and know from PAUSANIAS, not only that *Triophthalmos* was an epithet of





रुद्राणंशंकरश्चासि

ZEUS, but that a statue of him had been found, so early as the taking of *Troy*, with *a third eye in his forehead*, as we see him represented by the *Hindus*, we must conclude, that the identity of the two Gods falls little short of being demonstrated.

In the character of *Destroyer* also we may look upon this *Indian* Deity as corresponding with the *Stygian* JOVE, or PLUTO; especially since CA'LI', or *Time* in the feminine gender, is a name of his consort, who will appear hereafter to be PROSERPINE: indeed, if we can rely on a *Persian* translation of the *Bhágavat* (for the original is not yet in my possession), the sovereign of *Pátála*, or the *Infernal Regions*, is the *King of Serpents*, named SE'SHANA'GA; for CRISHNA is there said to have descended with his favourite ARJUN to the feat of that formidable divinity, from whom he instantly obtained the favour, which he requested, that the souls of a *Bráhma*n's six sons, who had been slain in battle, might reanimate their respective bodies; and SE'SHANA'GA is thus described: " He had  
 " a gorgeous appearance, with a thousand heads,  
 " and, on each of them, a crown set with re-  
 " splendent gems, one of which was larger and  
 " brighter than the rest; his eyes gleamed like  
 " flaming torches; but his neck, his tongues,  
 " and his body were black; the skirts of his

“ habiliment were yellow, and a sparkling jewel  
 “ hung in every one of his ears ; his arms were  
 “ extended, and adorned with rich bracelets,  
 “ and his hands bore the holy shell, the radiated  
 “ weapon, the mace for war, and the lotos.”  
 Thus PLUTO was often exhibited in painting  
 and sculpture with a diadem and sceptre ; but  
 himself and his equipage were of the blackest  
 shade.

There is yet another attribute of MAHA'-  
 DE'VA, by which he is too visibly distinguished  
 in the drawings and temples of *Bengal*. To  
 destroy, according to the *Védánti's* of *India*, the  
*Súfi's* of *Persia*, and many Philosophers of our  
*European* schools, is only to *generate* and *re-*  
*produce* in another form : hence the God of  
*Destruction* is holden in this country to preside  
 over *Generation* ; as a symbol of which he rides  
 on a *white bull*. Can we doubt, that the loves  
 and feats of JUPITER GENITOR (not forgetting  
 the *white bull* of EUROPA) and his extraordinary  
 title of LAPIS, for which no satisfactory reason  
 is commonly given, have a connexion with the  
*Indian* Philosophy and Mythology ? As to the  
 deity of *Lampfacus*, he was originally a mere  
 scare-crow, and ought not to have a place in  
 any mythological system ; and, in regard to  
 BACCHUS, the God of *Vintage* (between whose  
 acts and those of JUPITER we find, as BACON







observes, a wonderful affinity), his *Ithyphallick* images, measures, and ceremonies alluded probably to the supposed relation of Love and Wine; unless we believe them to have belonged originally to SIVA, one of whose names is *Vágis* or BA'GI'S, and to have been afterwards improperly applied. Though, in an Essay on the Gods of *India*, where the *Bráhmans* are positively forbidden to taste fermented liquors, we can have little to do with BACCHUS, as God of Wine, who was probably no more than the imaginary President over the vintage in *Italy*, *Greece*, and the lower *Asia*, yet we must not omit SURA'DE'VÍ the Goddess of Wine, who arose, say the *Hindus*, from the ocean, when it was churned with the mountain *Mandar*: and this fable seems to indicate, that the *Indians* came from a country, in which wine was anciently made and considered as a blessing; though the dangerous effects of intemperance induced their early legislators to prohibit the use of all spirituous liquors; and it were much to be wished, that so wise a law had never been violated.

Here may be introduced the JUPITER *Marrinus*, or NEPTUNE, of the *Romans*, as resembling MAHA'DE'VA in his *generative* character; especially as the *Hindu* God is the husband of BHAVA'NÍ, whose relation to the *waters* is evidently marked by her image being restored to

them at the conclusion of her great festival called *Durgótjáva* : she is known also to have attributes exactly similar to those of *VENUS Marina*, whose birth from the sea-foam and splendid rise from the Conch, in which she had been cradled, have afforded so many charming subjects to ancient and modern artists ; and it is very remarkable, that the *REMBHA'* of *INDRA'S* court, who seems to correspond with the popular *VENUS*, or Goddess of Beauty, was produced, according to the *Indian* Fabulists, from the froth of the churned ocean. The identity of the *trisúla* and the *trident*, the weapon of *SIVA* and of *NEPTUNE*, seems to establish this analogy ; and the veneration paid all over *India* to the large buccinum, especially when it can be found with the spiral line and mouth turned from left to right, brings instantly to our mind the musick of *TRITON*. The Genius of Water is *VARUNA* ; but he, like the rest, is far inferior to *MAHE'SA*, and even to *INDRA*, who is the Prince of the beneficent genii.

This way of considering the Gods as individual substances, but as distinct persons in distinct characters, is common to the *European* and *Indian* systems ; as well as the custom of giving the highest of them the greatest number of names : hence, not to repeat what has been said of *JUPITER*, came the triple capacity of *DIANA* ;



सिगातीगपहंकरः



CARTICEYA

and hence her petition in CALLIMACHUS, that she might be *palyonymous* or *many-titled*. The comfort of SIVA is more eminently marked by these distinctions than those of BRAHMA' or VISHNU; she resembles the ISIS *Myrionymas*, to whom an ancient marble, described by GRUTER, is dedicated; but her leading names and characters are PA'RVATÍ, DURGA', BHAVA'NÍ.

As the *Mountain-born* Goddess, or PA'RVATÍ, she has many properties of the *Olympian* JUNO: her majestick deportment, high spirit, and general attributes are the same; and we find her both on Mount *Cailása*, and at the banquets of the Deities, uniformly the companion of her husband. One circumstance in the parallel is extremely singular: she is usually attended by her son CA'RTICE'YA, who rides on a *peacock*; and, in some drawings, his own robe seems to be spangled with eyes; to which must be added that, in some of her temples, a *peacock*, without a rider, stands near her image. Though CA'RTICE'YA, with his six faces and numerous eyes, bears some resemblance to ARGUS, whom JUNO employed as her principal wardour, yet, as he is a Deity of the second class, and the Commander of celestial Armies, he seems clearly to be the ORUS of *Egypt* and the MARS of *Italy*: his name SCANDA, by which he is celebrated in one of the *Puránas*, has a connexion, I am persuaded,

with the old SECANDER of *Persia*, whom the poets ridiculously confound with the *Macedonian*.

The attributes of DURGA', or *Difficult of access*, are also conspicuous in the festival above-mentioned, which is called by her name, and in this character she resembles MINERVA, not the peaceful inventress of the fine and useful arts, but PALLAS, armed with a helmet and spear: both represent heroick *Virtue*, or Valour united with Wisdom; both slew Demons and Giants with their own hands, and both protected the wise and virtuous, who paid them due adoration. As PALLAS, they say, takes her name from *vibrating* a lance, and usually appears in complete armour, thus CURIS, the old *Latian* word for a spear, was one of JUNO's titles; and so, if GIRALDUS be correct, was HOPLOSMIA, which at *Elis*, it seems, meant a female dressed in panoply or complete accoutrements. The *unarmed* MINERVA of the *Romans* apparently corresponds, as patroness of Science and Genius, with SERESWATI, the wife of BRAHMA', and the emblem of his principal *Creative Power*: both goddesses have given their names to celebrated grammatical works; but the *Sâreswata* of SARU'PA'CHA'RYA is far more concise as well as more useful and agreeable than the *Minerva* of SANCTIUS. The MINERVA of *Italy* invented the *flute*, and

SERESWATÍ presides over melody: the protectress of *Athens* was even, on the same account, surnamed MUSICÉ.

Many learned Mythologists, with GIRALDUS at their head, consider the peaceful MINERVA as the ISIS of *Egypt*; from whose temple at *Sais* a wonderful inscription is quoted by PLUTARCH, which has a resemblance to the four *Sanscrit* verses above exhibited as the text of the *Bhágavat*: “ I am all, that hath been, and is, and shall be; “ and my veil no mortal hath ever removed.” For my part I have no doubt, that the ÍSWARA and ÍSÍ of the *Hindus* are the OSIRIS and ISIS of the *Egyptians*; though a distinct essay in the manner of PLUTARCH would be requisite in order to demonstrate their identity: they mean, I conceive, the *Powers of Nature* considered as Male and Female; and ISIS, like the other goddesses, represents the active power of her lord, whose *eight* forms, under which he becomes visible to man, were thus enumerated by CALIDA'SA near two thousand years ago: “ *Water* was the first “ work of the Creator; and *Fire* receives the “ oblation of clarified butter, as the law ordains; “ the *Sacrifice* is performed with solemnity; the “ *two Lights* of heaven distinguish time; the “ subtil *Ether*, which is the vehicle of sound, “ pervades the universe; the *Earth* is the natural parent of all increase; and by *Air* all



“ things breathing are animated : may íSA, the  
 “ *power* propitiously apparent in these eight  
 “ forms, bless and sustain you !” The *five* ele-  
 ments, therefore, as well as the Sun and Moon,  
 are considered as íSA or the *Ruler*, from  
 which word ísí may be regularly formed, though  
 íSA'NÍ be the usual name of his *active Power*,  
 adored as the Goddess of Nature. I have not  
 yet found in *Sanscrit* the wild, though poetical,  
 tale of Io ; but am persuaded, that, by means of  
 the *Puránas*, we shall in time discover all the  
 learning of the *Egyptians* without decyphering  
 their hieroglyphicks : the bull of íSWARA seems  
 to be APIS, or AP, as he is more correctly  
 named in the true reading of a passage in JERE-  
 MIAH ; and, if the veneration shown both in  
*Tibet* and *India* to so amiable and useful a qua-  
 druped as the Cow, together with the *regeneration*  
 of the LAMA himself, have not some affinity  
 with the religion of *Egypt* and the idolatry of  
*Israël*, we must at least allow that circumstances  
 have wonderfully coincided. BHAVA'NÍ now  
 demands our attention ; and in this character I  
 suppose the wife of MAHA'DE'VA to be as well  
 the JUNO *Cinxia* or LUCINA of the *Romans*  
 (called also by them DIANA *Salvizona*, and by  
 the *Greeks* ILITHYIA) as VENUS herself ; not  
 the *Idalian* queen of laughter and jollity, who,  
 with her Nymphs and Graces, was the beautiful

child of poetical imagination, and answers to the *Indian* REMBHA' with her celestial train of *Apsara's*, or damsels of paradise; but VENUS *Urania*, so luxuriantly painted by LUCRETIUS, and so properly invoked by him at the opening of a poem on nature; VENUS, presiding over *generation*, and, on that account, exhibited sometimes of both sexes (an union very common in the *Indian* sculptures), as in her *bearded* statue at *Rome*, in the images perhaps called *Hermathena*, and in those figures of her, which had the form of a *conical marble*; "for the reason of which figure "we are left, says TACITUS, in the dark:" the reason appears too clearly in the temples and paintings of *Hindustan*; where it never seems to have entered the heads of the legislators or people that any thing natural could be offensively obscene; a singularity, which pervades all their writings and conversation, but is no proof of depravity in their morals. Both PLATO and CICERO speak of EROS, or the Heavenly CUPID, as the son of VENUS and JUPITER; which proves, that the monarch of *Olympus* and the Goddess of Fecundity were connected as MAHA'DEVA and BHAVA'NI: the God CA'MA, indeed, had MA'YA' and CASYAPA, or *Uramus*, for his parents, at least according to the Mythologists of *Cashmir*; but, in most respects, he seems the twin-brother of CUPID with richer and more

lively appendages. One of his many epithets is *Dipaca*, the *Inflamer*, which is erroneously written *Dipuc*; and I am now convinced, that the sort of resemblance, which has been observed between his *Latin* and *Sanscrit* names, is accidental: in each name the three first letters are the *root*, and between them there is no affinity. Whether any Mythological connection subsisted between the *amaracus*, with the fragrant leaves of which HYMEN bound his temples, and the *tulasi of India*, must be left undetermined: the botanical relation of the two plants (if *amaracus* be properly translated *marjoram*) is extremely near.

One of the most remarkable ceremonies, in the festival of the *Indian Goddesses*, is that before-mentioned of casting her image *into the river*: the *Pandits*, of whom I inquired concerning its origin and import, answered, “that it was prescribed by the *Véda*, they knew not why;” but this custom has, I conceive, a relation to the doctrine, that *water* is a *form* of ÍSWARA, and consequently of ÍSA'NÍ, who is even represented by some as the patroness of that element, to which her figure is restored, after having received all due honours on *earth*, which is considered as another *form* of the God of Nature, though subsequent, in the order of Creation, to the primeval fluid. There seems no decisive





proof of one original system among idolatrous nations in the worship of river-gods and river-goddeses, nor in the homage paid to their streams, and the ideas of purification annexed to them: since *Greeks, Italians, Egyptians,* and *Hindus* might (without any communication with each other) have adored the several divinities of their great rivers, from which they derived pleasure, health, and abundance. The notion of Doctor MUSGRAVE, that large rivers were supposed, from their strength and rapidity, to be conducted by Gods, while rivulets only were protected by female deities, is, like most other notions of Grammarians on the genders of nouns, overthrown by facts. Most of the great *Indian* rivers are feminine; and the three goddesses of the waters, whom the *Hindus* chiefly venerate, are GANGA', who sprang, like armed PALLAS, from the head of the *Indian* JOVE; YAMUNA', daughter of the Sun, and SERESWATÍ: all three meet at *Prayága*, thence called *Trivéni*, or *the three plaited locks*; but SERESWATÍ, according to the popular belief, sinks under ground, and rises at another *Trivéni* near *Húgli*, where she rejoins her beloved GANGA'. The *Brabmaputra* is, indeed, a male river; and, as his name signifies the Son of BRAHMA', I thence took occasion to feign that he was married to GANGA', though I have not yet seen any

mention of him, as a God, in the *Sanscrit* books.

Two incarnate deities of the first rank, RA<sup>MA</sup> and CRISHNA, must now be introduced, and their several attributes distinctly explained. The first of them, I believe, was the DIONYSOS of the *Greeks*, whom they named BROMIUS, without knowing why, and BUGENES, when they represented him *horned*, as well as LYAIOS and ELEUTHERIOS, the Deliverer, and TRIAMBOS or DITHYRAMBOS, the Triumphant: most of those titles were adopted by the *Romans*, by whom he was called BRUMA, TAURIFORMIS, LIBER, TRIUMPHUS; and both nations had records or traditionary accounts of his *giving laws* to men and deciding their contests, of his improving navigation and commerce, and, what may appear yet more observable, of his conquering *India* and other countries with an army of *Satyrs*, commanded by no less a personage than PAN; whom LILIIUS GIRALDUS, on what authority I know not, asserts to have resided in *Iberia*, “when he had returned, says “the learned Mythologist, from the *Indian* war, “in which he accompanied BACCHUS.” It were superfluous in a mere essay, to run any length in the parallel between this *European* God and the sovereign of *Ayodhya*, whom the *Hindus* believe to have been an appearance on

earth of the *Preserving Power*; to have been a Conqueror of the highest renown, and the Deliverer of nations from tyrants, as well as of his consort SÍTA' from the giant RA'VAN, king of *Lancá*, and to have commanded in chief a numerous and intrepid race of those large *Monkeys*, which our naturalists, or some of them, have denominated *Indian Satyrs*: his General, the Prince of Satyrs, was named HANUMAT, or *with high cheek bones*; and, with workmen of such agility, he soon raised a bridge of rocks over the sea, part of which, say the *Hindus*, yet remains; and it is, probably, the series of rocks, to which the *Muselmans* or the *Portuguese* have given the foolish name of ADAM'S (it should be called RA'MA'S) bridge. Might not this army of Satyrs have been only a race of mountaineers, whom RA'MA, if such a monarch ever existed, had civilized? However that may be, the large breed of *Indian Apes* is at this moment held in high veneration by the *Hindus*, and fed with devotion by the *Brábmans*, who seem, in two or three places on the banks of the *Ganges*, to have a regular endowment for the support of them: they live in tribes of three or four hundred, are wonderfully gentle (I speak as an eye-witness), and appear to have some kind of order and subordination in their little sylvan polity. We must not omit, that



the father of *Hanumat* was the God of Wind, named PAVAN, one of the eight Genii; and, as PAN improved the pipe by adding six reeds, and “played exquisitely on the cithern a few moments after his birth,” so one of the four systems of *Indian* musick bears the name of HANUMAT, or HANUMA’N in the nominative, as its inventor, and is now in general estimation.

The war of *Lancá* is dramatically represented at the festival of RA’MA on the ninth day of the new moon of *Chaitra*; and the drama concludes (says HOLWEL, who had often seen it) with an exhibition of the fire-ordeal, by which the victor’s wife SÍTA’ gave proof of her conjugal fidelity; “the dialogue, he adds, is taken from one of the Eighteen holy books,” meaning, I suppose, the *Puránas*; but the *Hindus* have a great number of regular dramas at least two thousand years old, and among them are several very fine ones on the story of RA’MA. The first poet of the *Hindus* was the great VA’LMÍC, and his *Rámáyan* is an Epic Poem on the same subject, which, in unity of action, magnificence of imagery, and elegance of style, far surpasses the learned and elaborate work of NONNUS, entitled *Dionysíaca*, half of which, or twenty-four books, I perused with great eagerness, when I was very young, and should have travelled to the conclusion of it, if other pur-

suits had not engaged me: I shall never have leisure to compare the *Dionysiacks* with the *Rámáyan*, but am confident, that an accurate comparison of the two poems would prove DIONYSOS and RA'MA to have been the same person; and I incline to think, that he was RA'MA, the son of CU'SH, who might have established the first regular government in this part of *Asia*. I had almost forgotten, that *Meros* is said by the *Greeks* to have been a mountain of *India*, on which their DIONYSOS was born, and that *Méru*, though it generally means the north pole in the *Indian* geography, is also a mountain near the city of *Naisbada* or *Nysa*, called by the *Grecian* geographers *Dionysopolis*, and universally celebrated in the *Sanscrit* poems; though the birth place of RA'MA is supposed to have been *Ayódhyà* or *Audh*. That ancient city extended, if we believe the *Bráhmans*, over a line of ten *Yojans*, or about forty miles, and the present city of *Lac'bnau*, pronounced *Lucnow*, was only a lodge for one of its gates, called *Lacshmanadwára*, or the gate of LACSHMAN, a brother of RA'MA: M. SONNERAT supposes *Ayódhyá* to have been *Siam*; a most erroneous and unfounded supposition! which would have been of little consequence, if he had not grounded an argument on it, that RA'MA was the same person with BUDDHA,

who must have appeared many centuries after the conquest of *Lancá*.

The second great divinity, CRISHNA, passed a life, according to the *Indians*, of a most extraordinary and incomprehensible nature. He was the son of DE'VACÍ by VASUD'ÉVA; but his birth was concealed through fear of the tyrant CANSA, to whom it had been predicted, that a child born at that time in that family would destroy him: he was fostered, therefore, in *Mat-burá* by an honest herdsman, surnamed ANANDA, or *Happy*, and his amiable wife YASÓ'DA, who, like another PALES, was constantly occupied in her pastures and her dairy. In their family were a multitude of young *Gópa's* or *Cowberds*, and beautiful *Gópi's*, or *milkmaids*, who were his playfellows during his infancy; and, in his early youth, he selected *nine* damsels as his favourites, with whom he passed his gay hours in dancing, sporting, and playing on his flute. For the remarkable number of his *Gópi's* I have no authority but a whimsical picture, where *nine* girls are grouped in the form of an elephant, on which he sits and pipes; and, unfortunately, the word *nava* signifies both *nine* and *new* or *young*; so that, in the following stanza, it may admit of two interpretations:

*taran'ijápulínè navaballavi*  
*perisadá sabu cêlicutúbalát*









*drutavilamwitacháruvibárinam*  
*berimabam brīdayéna sadá vabé.*

“ I bear in my bosom continually that God,  
 “ who, for sportive recreation with a train of  
 “ nine (young) dairy-maids, dances gracefully,  
 “ now quick now slow, on the sands just left  
 “ by the Daughter of the Sun.”

Both he and the three RA'MAS are described as youths of perfect beauty ; but the princesses of *Hindustán*, as well as the damsels of NÁNDA'S farm, were passionately in love with CRISHNA, who continues to this hour the darling God of the *Indian* women. The sect of *Hindus*, who adore him with enthusiastick, and almost exclusive, devotion, have broached a doctrine, which they maintain with eagerness, and which seems general in these provinces ; that he was distinct from all the *Avatárs*, who had only an *ansa*, or portion, of his divinity ; while CRISHNA was the *person* of VISHNU himself in a human form : hence they consider the third RA'MA, his elder brother, as the eighth *Avatár* invested with an *emanation* of his divine radiance ; and, in the principal *Sanscrit* dictionary, compiled about two thousand years ago, CRISHNA, VA'SADE'VA, GO'VINDA, and other names of the Shepherd God, are intermixed with epithets of NA'RA'YAN, or the Divine Spirit. All the *Avatárs* are painted with gem-



med *Ethiopian*, or *Parthian*, coronets; with rays encircling their heads; jewels in their ears; two necklaces, one straight, and one pendent on their bosoms with dropping gems; garlands of well-disposed many-coloured flowers, or collars of pearls, hanging down below their waists; loose mantles of golden tissue or dyed silk, embroidered on their hems with flowers, elegantly thrown over one shoulder, and folded, like ribbands, across the breast; with bracelets too on one arm, and on each wrist: they are naked to the waists, and uniformly with *dark azure* flesh, in allusion, probably, to the tint of that primordial fluid, on which NA'RA'YAN moved in the beginning of time; but their skirts are bright yellow, the colour of the curious pericarpium in the centre of the water-lily, where *Nature*, as Dr. MURRAY observes, *in some degree discloses her secrets*, each seed containing, before it germinates, a few perfect leaves: they are sometimes drawn with that flower in one hand; a radiated elliptical ring, used as a missile weapon, in a second; the sacred shell, or left-handed buccinum, in a third; and a mace or battle-ax, in a fourth; but CRISHNA, when he appears, as he sometimes does appear, among the *Avatárs*, is more splendidly decorated than any, and wears a rich garland of sylvan flowers, whence he is named VANAMA'LI, as low as







SURYA.



ज्यातिषां विंशतिमान्

his ankles, which are adorned with strings of pearls. Dark blue, approaching to *black*, which is the meaning of the word *Crishna*, is believed to have been his complexion; and hence the large bee of that colour is consecrated to him, and is often drawn fluttering over his head: that azure tint, which approaches to blackness, is peculiar, as we have already remarked, to VISHNU; and hence, in the great reservoir or cistern at *Cátmánu* the capital of *Népal*, there is placed in a recumbent posture a large well-proportioned image of *blue* marble, representing NARA'YAN floating on the waters. But let us return to the actions of CRISHNA; who was not less heroick, than lovely, and, when a boy, slew the terrible serpent *Cáliya* with a number of giants and monsters: at a more advanced age, he put to death his cruel enemy CANSA; and, having taken under his protection the king YUDHISHT'HIR and the other *Pándus*, who had been grievously oppressed by the *Curus*, and their tyrannical chief, he kindled the war described in the great Epick Poem, entitled the *Mabábbárat*, at the prosperous conclusion of which he returned to his heavenly seat in *Vaicon't'ba*, having left the instructions comprised in the *Gítá* with his disconsolate friend ARJUN, whose grandson became sovereign of *India*.

In this picture it is impossible not to discover,

at the first glance, the features of APOLLO, surnamed *Nomios*, or the *Pastoral*, in *Greece*, and OPIFER in *Italy*; who fed the herds of ADMETUS, and slew the serpent *Pytho*; a God amorous, beautiful, and warlike: the word *Góvinda* may be literally translated *Nomios*, as *Césava*, is *Crinitus*, or *with fine hair*; but whether *Gópála*, or the *herdsman*, has any relation to *Apollo*, let our Etymologists determine. Colonel VALLANCEY, whose learned enquiries into the ancient literature of *Ireland* are highly interesting, assures me, that *Crishna* in *Irish* means the SUN; and we find APOLLO and SOL considered by the *Roman* poets as the same deity: I am inclined, indeed, to believe, that not only CRISHNA or VISHNU, but even BRAHMA' and SIVA, when united, and expressed by the mystical word O'M, were designed by the first idolaters to represent the Solar fire; but PHŒBUS, or the *orb of the Sun* personified, is adored by the *Indians* as the God SU'RYA, whence the sect, who pay him particular adoration, are called *Sauras*: their poets and painters describe his car as drawn by seven green horses, preceded by ARUN, or the *Dawn*, who acts as his charioteer, and followed by thousands of Genii worshipping him and modulating his praises. He has a multitude of names, and among them twelve epithets or titles, which

denote his distinct *powers* in each of the twelve months: those *powers* are called *Adityas*, or sons of ADITI by CASYAPA, the *Indian URANUS*; and one of them has, according to some authorities, the name of VISHNU or *Pervader*. SŪRYA is believed to have descended frequently from his car in a human shape, and to have left a race on earth, who are equally renowned in the *Indian* stories with the *Heliadai* of *Greece*: it is very singular, that his two sons called ASWINAU or ASWINI'CUMARAU, in the dual, should be considered as twin-brothers, and painted like CASTOR and POLLUX, but they have each the character of ÆSCULAPIUS among the Gods, and are believed to have been born of a nymph, who, in the form of a mare, was impregnated with sun-beams. I suspect the whole fable of CASYAPA and his progeny to be astronomical; and cannot but imagine, that the *Greek* name CASSIOPEIA has a relation to it. Another great *Indian* family are called the *Children of the Moon*, or CHANDRA; who is a male Deity, and consequently not to be compared with ARTEMIS or DIANA; nor have I yet found a parallel in *India* for the Goddess of the *Chase*, who seems to have been the daughter of an *European* fancy, and very naturally created by the invention of *Bucolick* and *Georgick* poets: yet, since the *Moon* is a form of



I'SWARA, the God of Nature, according to the verse of CA'LIDA'SA, and since I'SA'NI has been shown to be his *consort* or *power*, we may consider her, in one of her characters, as LUNA; especially as we shall soon be convinced that, in the shades below, she corresponds with the HECATE of *Europe*.

The worship of Solar, or Vestal, *Fire* may be ascribed, like that of OSIRIS and ISIS, to the second source of mythology, or an enthusiastick admiration of Nature's wonderful powers; and it seems, as far as I can yet understand the *Védas*, to be the principal worship recommended in them. We have seen, that MAHA'DE'VA himself is personated by *Fire*; but, subordinate to him, is the God AGNI, often called PA'VACA, or the *Purifier*, who answers to the VULCAN of *Egypt*, where he was a Deity of high rank; and his wife SWA'HA' resembles the younger VESTA, or VESTIA, as the *Eolians* pronounced the *Greek* word for a *heart*: BHAVA'NI, or VENUS, is the consort of the Supreme Destructive and Generative Power; but the *Greeks* and *Romans*, whose system is less regular than that of the *Indians*, married her to their *divine artist*, whom they also named HEPHAISTOS and VULCAN, and who seems to be the *Indian* VISWACARMAN, the *forgery of arms* for the Gods, and inventor of the *agnyastra*, or *fiery*

*shaft*, in the war between them and the *Daiytas* or *Titans*. It is not easy here to refrain from observing (and, if the observation give offence in *England*, it is contrary to my intention) that the newly discovered planet should unquestionably be named VULCAN; since the confusion of analogy in the names of the planets is inelegant, unscholarly, and unphilosophical: the name URANUS is appropriated to the firmament; but VULCAN, the slowest of the Gods, and, according to the *Egyptian* priests, the oldest of them, agrees admirably with an orb, which must perform its revolution in a very long period; and, by giving it this denomination, we shall have seven primary planets with the names of as many *Roman* Deities, MERCURY, VENUS, TELLUS, MARS, JUPITER, SATURN, VULCAN.

It has already been intimated, that the MUSES and NYMPHS are the GO'PYA of *Math'urà*, and of *Góverdhan*, the *Parnassus* of the *Hindus*; and the lyric poems of JAYADE'VA will fully justify this opinion; but the *Nymphs* of *Musick* are the *thirty* RA'GINI'S or *Female Passions*, whose various functions and properties are so richly delineated by the *Indian* painters and so finely described by the poets; but I will not anticipate what will require a separate Essay, by enlarging here on the beautiful allegories of the

*Hindus* in their system of musical modes, which they call RA'GA's, or *Passions*, and supposed to be Genii or Demigods. A very distinguished son of BRAHMA', named NA'RED, whose actions are the subject of a *Purána*, bears a strong resemblance to HERMES or MERCURY: he was a wise legislator, great in arts and in arms, an eloquent messenger of the Gods either to one another or to favoured mortals, and a musician of exquisite skill; his invention of the *Víná*, or *Indian* lute, is thus described in the poem entitled *Mágha*: "NA'RED sat watching from  
 "time to time his large *Víná*, which, by the  
 "impulse of the breeze, yielded notes, that  
 "pierced successively the regions of his ear,  
 "and proceeded by musical intervals." The law tract, supposed to have been revealed by NA'RED, is at this hour cited by the *Pandits*; and we cannot, therefore, believe him to have been the patron of *Thieves*; though an innocent theft of CRISHNA's cattle, by way of putting his divinity to a proof, be strangely imputed, in the *Bhágavat*, to his father BRAHMA'.

The last of the *Greek* or *Italian* divinities, for whom we find a parallel in the Pantheon of *India*, is the *Stygian* or *Taurick* DIANA, otherwise named HECATE, and often confounded with PROSERPINE; and there can be no doubt of her identity with CA'LI, or the wife of SIVA





in his character of the *Stygian* Jove. To this black Goddess with a collar of golden skulls, as we see her exhibited in all her principal temples, *human sacrifices* were anciently offered, as the *Védas* enjoined ; but, in the present age, they are absolutely prohibited, as are also the sacrifices of bulls and horses : kids are still offered to her ; and, to palliate the cruelty of the slaughter, which gave such offence to BUDDHA, the *Bráhmans* inculcate a belief, that the poor victims rise in the heaven of INDRA, where they become the musicians of his band. Instead of the obsolete, and now illegal, sacrifices of a man, a bull, and a horse, called *Neramédha*, *Gómédha*, and *As'wamédha*, the powers of nature are thought to be propitiated by the less bloody ceremonies at the end of autumn, when the festivals of CA'LI' and LACSHMI' are solemnized nearly at the same time : now, if it be asked, how the Goddess of Death came to be united with the mild patroness of Abundance, I must propose another question, “ How came PROSERPINE to “ be represented in the *European* system as the “ daughter of CERES ? ” Perhaps, both questions may be answered by the proposition of natural philosophers, that “ the apparent destruction of “ a substance is the production of it in a different form.” The wild musick of CA'LI's priests at one of her festivals brought instantly

to my recollection the *Scythian* measures of DIANA's adorers in the splendid opera of IPHIGENIA in *Tauris*, which GLUCK exhibited at *Paris* with less genius, indeed, than art, but with every advantage that an orchestra could supply.

That we may not dismiss this assemblage of *European* and *Asiatick* divinities with a subject so horrid as the altars of HECATE and CALI, let us conclude with two remarks, which properly, indeed, belong to the *Indian* Philosophy, with which we are not at present concerned. First; *Elysium* (not the place, but the bliss enjoyed there, in which sense MILTON uses the word) cannot but appear, as described by the poets, a very tedious and insipid kind of enjoyment: it is, however, more exalted than the temporary *Elysium* in the court of INDRA, where the pleasures, as in MUHAMMED's paradise, are wholly sensual; but the *Mukti*, or *Elysian* happiness of the *Védánta* School is far more sublime; for they represent it as a total absorption, though not such as to destroy consciousness, in the divine essence; but, for the reason before suggested, I say no more of this idea of beatitude, and forbear touching on the doctrine of transmigration and the similarity of the *Védánta* to the *Sicilian*, *Italick*, and old *Academick* Schools.

Secondly; in the mystical and elevated character of PAN, as a personification of the *Uni-*

*verse*, according to the notion of lord BACON, there arises a sort of similitude between him and CRISHNA considered as NA'RA'YAN. The *Grecian* god plays divinely on his reed, to express, we are told, ethereal harmony; he has his attendant Nymphs of the pastures and the dairy; his face is as radiant as the sky, and his head illuminated with the horns of a crescent; whilst his lower extremities are deformed and shaggy, as a symbol of the vegetables, which the earth produces, and of the beasts, who roam over the face of it: now we may compare this portrait, partly with the general character of CRISHNA, the Shepherd God, and partly with the description in the *Bhagavat* of the divine spirit exhibited in the form of this *Universal World*; to which we may add the following story from the same extraordinary poem. The Nymphs had complained to YASO'DA', that the child CRISHNA had been drinking their curds and milk: on being reproved by his foster-mother for this indiscretion, he requested her to examine his mouth; in which, to her just amazement, she beheld the *whole universe* in all its plenitude of magnificence.

We must not be surprized at finding, on a close examination, that the characters of all the pagan deities, male and female, melt into each other, and at last into one or two; for it seems



a well-founded opinion, that the whole crowd of gods and goddesses in ancient *Rome*, and modern *Várânes*, mean only the powers of nature, and principally those of the SUN, expressed in a variety of ways and by a multitude of fanciful names.

Thus have I attempted to trace, imperfectly at present for want of ampler materials, but with a confidence continually increasing as I advanced, a parallel between the Gods adored in three very different nations, *Greece*, *Italy*, and *India*; but, which was the original system and which the copy, I will not presume to decide; nor are we likely, I believe, to be soon furnished with sufficient grounds for a decision: the fundamental rule, that *natural, and most human, operations proceed from the simple to the compound*, will afford no assistance on this point; since neither the *Asiatick* nor *European* system has any simplicity in it; and both are so complex, not to say absurd, however intermixed with the beautiful and the sublime, that the honour, such as it is, of the invention cannot be allotted to either with tolerable certainty.

Since *Egypt* appears to have been the grand source of knowledge for the *western*, and *India* for the more *eastern*, parts of the globe, it may seem a material question, whether the *Egyptians* communicated their Mythology and Philosophy

to the *Hindus*, or converfely ; but what the learned of *Memphis* wrote or faid concerning *India*, no mortal knows : and what the lærned of *Vá-ránes* have afferted, if any thing, concerning *Egypt*, can give us little fatisfaction : fuch circumftantial evidence on this queftion as I have been able to colleét, fhall nevertheless be ftated ; becaufe, unfatisfactory as it is, there may be fomething in it not wholly unworthy of notice ; though after all, whatever colonies may have come from the *Nile* to the *Ganges*, we fhall, perhaps, agree at laft with Mr. BRYANT, that *Egyptians*, *Indians*, *Greeks*, and *Italians*, proceeded originally from one central place, and that the fame people carried their religion and fciences into *China* and *Japan* : may we not add, even to *Mexico* and *Peru* ?

Every one knows, that the true name of *Egypt* is *Mis'r*, fpelled with a palatial fibilant both in *Hebrew* and *Arabick* : it feems in *Hebrew* to have been the proper name of the firft fettler in it ; and, when the *Arabs* ufe the word for a great city, they probably mean a city like the capital of *Egypt*. Father MARCO, a *Roman* Miffionary, who, though not a fcholar of the firft rate, is incapable, I am perfuaded, of deliberate falfehood, lent me the laft book of a *Rámáyan*, which he had tranflated through the *Hindi* into his native language, and with it a fhort vocabulary of My-

thological and Historical names, which had been explained to him by the *Pandits* of *Betiya*, where he had long resided: one of the articles in his little dictionary was, “*Tirút*, a town and province, in which the priests from *Egypt* settled;” and, when I asked him, what name *Egypt* bore among the *Hindus*, he said *Mis'r*, but observed, that they sometimes confounded it with *Abyssinia*. I perceived, that his memory of what he had written was correct; for *Mis'r* was another word in his index, “from which country, he said, came the *Egyptian* priests, who settled in *Tirút*.” I suspected immediately, that his intelligence flowed from the *Muselmans*, who call sugar-candy *Misfri* or *Egyptian*; but, when I examined him closely, and earnestly desired him to recollect from whom he had received his information, he repeatedly and positively declared, that “it had been given him by several *Hindus*, and particularly by a *Brábmán*, his intimate friend, who was reputed a considerable *Pandit*, and had lived three years near his house.” We then conceived, that the seat of his *Egyptian* colony must have been *Tiróbit*, commonly pronounced *Tirút*, and anciently called *Mit'bilà*, the principal town of *Janacadesa*, or north *Babàr*; but *MAHE'SA Pandit*, who was born in that very district, and who submitted patiently to a long examination concern-

ing *Mis'r*, overfet all our conclufions: he denied, that the *Brábmans* of his country were generally furnamed MISR, as we had been informed; and faid, that the addition of MISRA to the name of VA'CHESPETI, and other learned authors, was a title formerly conferred on the writers of *miscellanies*, or *compilers* of various tracts on religion or fcience, the word being derived from a root fignifying to *mix*. Being asked, where the country of *Mis'r* was, "There are two, he answered, of that name; one of them *in the weft* "under the dominion of *Mufelmáns*, and another, which all the *Sástras* and *Puránas* mention, in a mountainous region to the *north* of "*Ayódhya*:" it is evident, that by the firft he meant *Egypt*, but what he meant by the fecond, it is not eafy to afcertain. A country, called *Tirubut* by our geographers, appears in the maps between the north-eaftern frontier of *Audh* and the mountains of *Népal*; but whether that was the *Tirút* mentioned to father MARCO by his friend of *Betiya*, I cannot decide. This only I know with certainty, that *Mifra* is an epithet of two *Brábmans* in the drama of SACONTALA', which was written near a century before the birth of CHRIST; that fome of the greateft lawyers, and two of the fineft dramattick poets, of *India* have the fame title; that we hear it frequently in court added to the names of *Hindu* parties; and that none of the *Pandits*, whom I have fince

consulted, pretend to know the true meaning of the word, as a proper name, or to give any other explanation of it than that it is *a surname of Bráhmans in the west*. On the account given to Colonel KYP by the old *Rájà* of *Crisbnanagar*, “ concerning *traditions* among the *Hindus*, that “ some *Egyptians* had settled in this country,” I cannot rely ; because I am credibly informed by some of the *Rájà’s* own family, that he was not a man of solid learning, though he possessed curious books, and had been attentive to the conversation of learned men : besides, I know that his son and most of his kinsmen have been dabblers in *Persian* literature, and believe them very likely, by confounding one source of information with another, to puzzle themselves, and mislead those with whom they converse. The word *Mis’r*, spelled also in *Sanscrit* with a palatial sibilant, is very remarkable ; and, as far as Etymology can help us, we may safely derive *Nilus* from the *Sanscrit* word *nila*, or *blue* ; since DIONYSIUS expressly calls the waters of that river “ an *azure* stream ;” and, if we can depend on MARCO’S *Italian* version of the *Rámáyan*, the name of *Nilá* is given to a lofty and sacred mountain with a summit of pure gold, from which flowed a river of clear, sweet, and fresh water. M. SONNERAT refers to a dissertation by Mr. SCHMIT, which gained a prize at the Academy of Inscriptions, “ On an *Egyptian* Colony esta-

“blished in *India* :” it would be worth while to examine his authorities, and either to overturn or verify them by such higher authorities, as are now accessible in these provinces. I strongly incline to think him right, and to believe that *Egyptian* priests have actually come from the *Nile* to the *Gangà* and *Yamunà*, which the *Bráhmans* most assuredly would never have left: they might, indeed, have come either to be instructed or to instruct; but it seems more probable, that they visited the *Surmans* of *India*, as the sages of *Greece* visited them, rather to acquire than to impart knowledge; nor is it likely, that the self-sufficient *Bráhmans* would have received them as their preceptors.

Be all this as it may, I am persuaded, that a connexion subsisted between the old idolatrous nations of *Egypt*, *India*, *Greece*, and *Italy*, long before they migrated to their several settlements, and consequently before the birth of *MOSES*; but the proof of this proposition will in no degree affect the truth and sanctity of the *Mosaick* History, which, if confirmation were necessary, it would rather tend to confirm. The *Divine Legate*, educated by the daughter of a king, and in all respects highly accomplished, could not but know the mythological system of *Egypt*; but he must have condemned the superstitions of that people, and despised the speculative

absurdities of their priests ; though some of their traditions concerning the creation and the flood were grounded on truth. Who was better acquainted with the mythology of *Athens* than SOCRATES? Who more accurately versed in the Rabbinical doctrines than PAUL? Who possessed clearer ideas of all ancient astronomical systems than NEWTON, or of scholastick metaphysics than LOCKE? In whom could the *Romish* Church have had a more formidable opponent than in CHILLINGWORTH, whose deep knowledge of its tenets rendered him so competent to dispute them? In a word, who more exactly knew the abominable rites and shocking idolatry of *Canaan* than MOSES himself? Yet the learning of those great men only incited them to seek other sources of truth, piety, and virtue, than those in which they had long been immersed. There is no shadow then of a foundation for an opinion, that MOSES borrowed the first nine or ten chapters of *Genesis* from the literature of *Egypt*: still less can the adamantine pillars of our *Christian* faith be moved by the result of any debates on the comparative antiquity of the *Hindus* and *Egyptians*, or of any inquiries into the *Indian* Theology. Very respectable natives have assured me, that one or two missionaries have been absurd enough, in their zeal for the conversion of the *Gentiles*,

to urge, " that the *Hindus* were even now almost *Christians*, because their BRAHMA', VISHNU, and MAHESA, were no other than the "*Christian Trinity*;" a sentence, in which we can only doubt, whether folly, ignorance, or impiety predominates. The three powers, *Creative*, *Preservative*, and *Destructive*, which the *Hindus* express by the trilateral word *Om*, were grossly ascribed by the first idolaters to the *heat*, *light*, and *flame* of their mistaken divinity, the Sun; and their wiser successors in the East, who perceived that the Sun was only a created thing, applied those powers to its creator; but the *Indian Triad*, and that of PLATO, which he calls the Supreme Good, the Reason, and the Soul, are infinitely removed from the holiness and sublimity of the doctrine, which pious *Christians* have deduced from texts in the Gospel, though other *Christians*, as pious, openly profess their dissent from them. Each sect must be justified by its own faith and good intentions: this only I mean to inculcate, that the tenet of our church cannot without profaneness be compared with that of the *Hindus*, which has only an apparent resemblance to it, but a very different meaning. One singular fact, however, must not be suffered to pass unnoticed. That the name of CRISHNA, and the general outline of his story, were long anterior to the birth of



our Saviour, and probably to the time of HOMER, we know very certainly; yet the celebrated poem, entitled *Bhágavat*, which contains a prolix account of his life, is filled with narratives of a most extraordinary kind, but strangely variegated and intermixed with poetical decorations: the incarnate deity of the *Sanfcrit* romance was cradled, as it informs us, among *Herdsmen*, but it adds, that he was educated among them, and passed his youth in playing with a party of milkmaids; a tyrant, at the time of his birth, ordered all new-born males to be slain, yet this wonderful babe was preserved by biting the breast, instead of sucking the poisoned nipple, of a nurse commissioned to kill him; he performed amazing, but ridiculous, miracles in his infancy, and, at the age of seven years, held up a mountain on the tip of his little finger: he saved multitudes partly by his arms and partly by his miraculous powers; he raised the dead by descending for that purpose to the lowest regions; he was the meekest and best-tempered of beings, washed the feet of the *Brábmans*, and preached very nobly, indeed, and sublimely, but always in their favour; he was pure and chaste in reality, but exhibited an appearance of excessive libertinism, and had wives or mistresses too numerous to be counted; lastly, he was benevolent and tender, yet fo-

mented and conducted a terrible war. This motley story must induce an opinion that the spurious Gospels, which abounded in the first age of *Christianity*, had been brought to *India*, and the wildest parts of them repeated to the *Hindus*, who ingrafted them on the old fable of *CE'SAVA*, the *APOLLO* of *Greece*.

As to the general extension of our pure faith in *Hindustán*, there are at present many sad obstacles to it. The *Muselmáns* are already a sort of heterodox *Christians*: they are *Christians*, if *LOCKE* reasons justly, because they firmly believe the immaculate conception, divine character, and miracles of the *MESSIAH*; but they are heterodox, in denying vehemently his character of Son, and his equality, as God, with the Father, of whose unity and attributes they entertain and express the most awful ideas; while they consider our doctrine as perfect blasphemy, and insist, that our copies of the Scriptures have been corrupted both by *Jews* and *Christians*. It will be inexpressibly difficult to undeceive them, and scarce possible to diminish their veneration for *MOHAMMED* and *ALI*, who were both very extraordinary men, and the second, a man of unexceptionable morals: the *Korán* shines, indeed, with a borrowed light, since most of its beauties are taken from our Scrip-

tures; but it has great beauties, and the *Muselmáns* will not be convinced that they were borrowed. The *Hindus* on the other hand would readily admit the truth of the Gospel; but they contend, that it is perfectly consistent with their *Sástras*: the deity, they say, has appeared innumerable times, in many parts of this world and of all worlds, for the salvation of his creatures; and though we adore him in one appearance, and they in others, yet we adore, they say, the same God, to whom our several worships, though different in form, are equally acceptable, if they be sincere in substance. We may assure ourselves, that neither *Muselmáns* nor *Hindus* will ever be converted by any mission from the Church of *Rome*, or from any other church; and the only human mode, perhaps, of causing so great a revolution will be to translate into *Sanscrit* and *Persian* such chapters of the Prophets, particularly of *ISAIAH*, as are indisputably Evangelical, together with one of the Gospels, and a plain prefatory discourse containing full evidence of the very distant ages, in which the predictions themselves, and the history of the divine person predicted, were severally made publick; and then quietly to disperse the work among the well-educated natives; with whom if in due time it failed of producing

very salutary fruit by its natural influence, we could only lament more than ever the strength of prejudice, and the weakness of unassisted reason.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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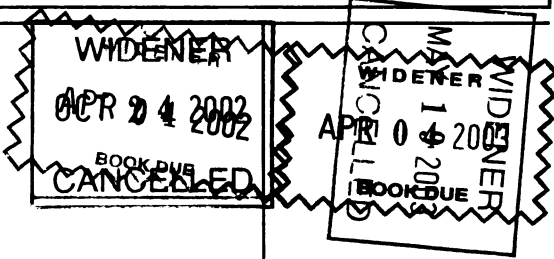




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