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ИЗДАНИЕ ГРАФА С. Д. ШЕРЕМЕТЕВА I.



ИЗДАНИЕ

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ASIATIC RESEARCHES;

OR,

TRANSACTIONS

OF THE

SOCIETY

INSTITUTED IN BENGAL,

FOR INQUIRING INTO THE

HISTORY AND ANTIQUITIES, THE ARTS,

SCIENCES, AND LITERATURE,

OF

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE deserved estimation in which the Transactions of the various Societies in Great Britain, as well as upon the Continent, have hitherto been held is a circumstance so well known that nothing in this place need be said upon the subject; but the lucubrations of the Asiatic Society have not been so widely diffused. Nearly the whole of the impression of the Asiatic Researches is distributed in the East Indies, therefore very few copies reach Europe; and this among other reasons, has given rise to the present publication. To suffer so many valuable Papers, on a vast variety of Literary, Scientific, and Antiquarian Subjects, to lie buried on the shelves of a few persons would have been an unpardonable offence; but to rescue from a kind of oblivion, and to present to their Countrymen in Europe, a regular series of the Papers communicated to the Asiatic Society, is the intention of the Undertakers of the present Work. This Society, it is well known, had the late excellent and learned Sir WILLIAM JONES for its Founder, and for its President many years; but since he has favoured the world with an account of its origin in the first volume of the work, we shall content ourselves with referring our Readers to that discourse, wherein they will find an ample display of its utility, and a detail of its objects of pursuit.

IN the dissertation on the Religious Ceremonies of the Hindus, p. 361, of the present volume, the author cites a passage which appears to have reference to the creation of the universe, and which seems, upon the whole, to bear some resemblance to the account given by Moses in the Pentateuch. This naturally leads us to consider the antiquity of both the Mosaic and Hindu Scriptures, and to compare, in some measure, the accounts given in each work relative to that important fact.

The writings of MOSES have generally been considered as more ancient than those of any other person; but the Hindu Scriptures, so far as the researches of several learned men have extended, appear to be of very high antiquity, and are even carried by some beyond the time of the Hebrew Lawgiver. Sir W. JONES, in his Preface to the "Institutes of Hindu Law; or the Ordinances of MENU, according to the Gloss of CULLU'CA," carries the highest age of the *Yajur veda* 1580 years before the birth of CHRIST, which is nine years previous to the birth of MOSES, and ninety before MOSES departed from Egypt with the Israelites. This date, of 1580 years before CHRIST, seems the more probable, because the Hindu sages are said to have delivered their knowledge orally. CULLU'A BHATTA produced, what may be said to be very truly, the shortest, yet the most luminous; the least ostentatious, yet the most learned; the deepest, yet the most agreeable, commentary on the Hindu Scriptures, that ever

was

was composed on any author ancient or modern, European or Asiatic: and it is this work to which the learned generally apply, on account of its clearness. We shall not, however, take up your time with a dissertation on the exact age of either the Hebrew or the Hindu Scriptures: both are ancient: let the learned judge: but some extracts from the Hindu and Hebrew accounts of the creation may serve to shew how much they agree together: whether the Hindu Bráhmens borrowed from MOSES, or MOSES from the Hindu Bráhmens, is not our present enquiry.

Extracts from the Laws of *Extracts from the Writings*
MENU. *of MOSES.*

THIS *universe* existed only in the first divine idea yet unexpanded, as if involved in darkness, imperceptible, undefinable, undiscoverable by reason, and undiscovered by revelation, as if it were wholly immersed in sleep; (chap. i. 5.)

Then the *sole* self-existing power, himself undiscerned, but making this world discernible, with five elements and other principles of nature, appeared with undiminished glory, *expanding his idea*, or dispelling the gloom. (ib. 6.)

He, whom the mind alone can perceive, whose essence eludes the external organs, who has no visible

IN the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. (Gen. i. 1.)

parts,

MENU.

MOSES.

parts, who exists from eternity, even HE, the soul of all beings, whom no being can comprehend, shone forth in person. (ib. 7.)

He, having willed to produce various beings from his own divine substance, first with a thought created the waters, &c. (ib. 8.)

The waters are called *nárá*, because they were the production of NARA, or *the spirit of God*; and, since they were his first *ayana*, or *place of motion*, he thence is named NA'RA'YANA, or *moving on the waters* (ib. 10.)

From THAT WHICH IS, the first cause, not the object of sense, existing *every where in substance*, not existing *to our perception*, without beginning or end, was produced the divine male. (ib. 11.)

—He framed the heaven *above* and the earth *beneath*: in the midst *he placed* the subtil ether, the eight regions, and the permanent receptacle of waters. (ib. 13.)

And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep: and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. (ib. 2.)

And God said, Let us make man in our image. (ib. 26.)

And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters; —and God called the firmament Heaven. (ib. 6, 8.)

—He

MENU.

—He framed all creatures. (ib. 16).

—He too first assigned to all creatures distinct names, distinct acts, and distinct occupations. (ib. 21.)

—He gave being to time and the divisions of time, to the stars also, and the planets, to rivers, oceans, and mountains, to level plains, and uneven vallies. (ib. 24.)

MOSES.

And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven. And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind. And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind. (ib. 20, 21, 24.)

God brought every beast of the field unto Adam to see what he would call them. And God put the man into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. (ib. ii. 19, 15. iv. 2.)

God said, let there be lights in the firmament of heaven, to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for days, and for years.—And God made two great
To

MENU.

To devotion, speech, &c. for he willed the exist-
of all created things.
(ib. 25.)

For the sake of distin-
guishing actions, He made
a total difference between
right and wrong. (ib. 26.)

—Having divided his own
substance, the mighty Power
became half male, half fe-
male. (ib. 32.)

He, whose powers are in-
comprehensible, having cre-
ated this universe,
was again absorbed in the
Spirit, changing *the* time
of energy for *the* time of re-
pose. (ib. 56.)

Thus the accounts of MOSES and the Hindu
Scriptures concerning the creation may be easily
reconciled to each other. But it is not our inten-
tion to support the Hindu writings in preference
to the Hebrew Pentateuch; all we desire is, that
truth may be investigated, and that error may be
exploded. There are many persons, no doubt in
the East better acquainted with the antiquity of
the

MOSES.

lights; the greater light
to rule the day, and the
lesser light to rule the
night. (Gen. i. 14, 16.
see also chap. ii. 10, 11,
13, 14. & aliis locis.)

If thou doest well, shalt
thou not be accepted?
and if thou doest not well,
sin lieth at the door. (ib.
iv. 7. see also chap. ii.
16, 17.)

God created man in his
own image; in the image
of God created he him;
male and female created
he them. (ib. i. 27.)

Thus the heavens and
the earth were finished,
and all the host of them.
And on the seventh day
God ended his work;—
and rested on the seventh
day from all his work.
(ib. ii. 1, 2.)

the Sanscrit books than we are, and by our intercourse with the Bráhmens and learned Pundits, much may be done towards a right discovery of this important matter. The Hindus have, for many ages, looked upon their Scriptures as a revelation from the Supreme Being of his mind and will concerning the works of his creation. They bring forward the Deity declaring his own mind, and think they have an indubitable right to follow the precepts which his word, according to their ancient lawgivers, contains. MOSES too, in his Pentateuch, tells us that the Almighty ordered him to promulgate his law among the people, and to shew them the path in which they should walk. The Jews, and after them the Christians, have generally received MOSES's account as valid, and have consequently followed its dictates with a religious zeal. Enthusiasm among every description of people must certainly be despised, but zeal in contending for the truth is highly commendable in whomsoever it shall be found. Had the Hindu writings, divested of their fabulous passages, been disseminated in the Western world with as much energy as the works of MOSES have been spread abroad, perhaps they would likewise have found many admirers and advocates.

Sir W. JONES, speaking of the Laws of MENU, says, they contain abundance of curious matter extremely interesting both to speculative lawyers and antiquaries, with many beauties which need not be pointed out, and with many blemishes which cannot be justified or palliated. It is a system of despotism and priestcraft, both indeed limited by law, but artfully conspiring to give mu-

tual support, though with mutual checks; it is filled with strange conceits in metaphysics and natural philosophy, with idle superstition, and with a scheme of theology most obscurely figurative, and consequently liable to dangerous misconception; it bounds with minute and childish formalities, with ceremonies generally absurd and ridiculous; the punishments are partial and fanciful; for some crimes, dreadfully cruel, for other reprehensibly slight; and the very morals, though rigid enough on the whole, are in one or two instances (as in the case of light oaths and of pious perjury) unaccountably relaxed: nevertheless, a spirit of sublime devotion, of benevolence to mankind, and of amiable tenderness to all sentient creatures, pervades the whole work; the style of it has a certain austere majesty, that sounds like the language of legislation, and extorts a respectful awe; the sentiments of independence on all beings but God, and the harsh admonitions, even to kings, are truly noble; and the many panegyrics on the *Gáyatri* the *mother*, as it is called, of the *Véda*, prove the author to have *adored* (not the visible material *sun*, but) *that divine and incomparably greater light*, to use the words of the most venerable text in the Indian Scripture, *which illumines all, delights all, from which all proceed, to which all must return, and which can alone irradiate* (not our visual organs merely, but our souls and) *our intellects*.

The writings of MOSES too, are not totally exempt from passages which, to the mere reason of humanity, carry with them the appearance of fiction or of cruelty. Thus the formation of woman by throwing ADAM into a deep sleep, and taking
a rib

a rib from is side, has long been matter of ridicule for the sons of infidelity ; as have many other parts of the Pentateuch. But whatever opinion may be entertained of MENE and his laws, it must be remembered that they are revered as the word of God by many millions of Hindus who compose several great nations, who are of vast importance to the political and commercial interests of Europe, whose well directed industry would add largely to the wealth of Great Britian, and who ask no greater compensation than protection for their persons and property, justice in their temporal concerns, indulgence to their old religion, and the benefit of those laws, which they hold sacred, and which alone they can understand.





I.

HISTORICAL REMARKS ON THE COAST OF MALABAR.

WITH
SOME DESCRIPTION OF THE MANNERS OF
ITS INHABITANTS.

By JONATHAN DUNCAN, Esquire.

SEC-
TION.

I. **I**N the book called *Kerul Oodputte*, or, “The emerging of the Country of *Kerul*,” (of which, during my stay at Calicut, in the year 1793, I made the best translation into English in my power, through the medium of a version first rendered into Persian, under my own inspection, from the Malabaric copy procured from one of the Rajahs of the *Zamorin’s* family,) the origin of that coast is ascribed to the piety or penitence of *Puresu Rama*, or *Puresram*, (one of the incarnations of *VISHNU*,) who, stung with remorse for the blood he had so profusely shed in overcoming the Rajahs of the *Khetry* tribe, applied to *VARUNA*, the God of the Ocean, to supply him with a tract of ground to bestow on the *Bráhmens*; and *VARUNA* having accordingly withdrawn his waters from the *Gowkern* (a hill in the vicinity of Mangalore) to Cape Comorin, this strip of territory has, from its situation, as lying along the foot of the *Sukbien* (by the Europeans called the *Ghaut*) range of mountains, acquired the name of *Mulyalum*, (i. e. Skirting at the Bottom of the Hills,) a term that may have been shortened into *Maleyam*, or *Maleam*; whence are also probably

A

its

its common names of *Mulievar* and *Malabar*; all which *Purefram* is firmly believed, by its native Hindu inhabitants, to have parcelled out among different tribes of *Bráhmens*, and to have directed that the entire produce of the soil should be appropriated to their maintenance, and towards the edification of temples, and for the support of divine worship; whence it still continues to be distinguished in their writings by the term of *Kermbhoomy*, or, “The Land of Good Works for the Expiation of Sin.”

II. The country thus obtained from the sea *, is represented to have remained long in a marshy and scarcely habitable state; insomuch, that the first occupants, whom *Purefram* is said to have brought into it from the eastern, and even the northern, part of India, again abandoned it; being more especially scared by the multitude of serpents with which the mud and slime of this newly immersed tract is related to have then abounded; and to which numerous accidents are ascribed, until *Purefram* taught the inhabitants to propitiate these animals, by introducing the worship of them and of their images, which became from that period objects of adoration.

III. The country of *Mulyalum* was, according to the *Kerul Oodputtee*, afterwards divided into the four following Tookrees, or divisions:

- 1st. From Gowkern, already mentioned, to the Perumbura River, was called the *Tooroo*, or *Turu Ranje*.
- 2d. From

* In a manuscript account of Malabar that I have seen, and which is ascribed to a Bishop of Virapoli, (the seat of a famous Roman Catholic seminary near Cochin,) he observes, that, by the accounts of the learned natives of that coast, it is little more than 2300 years since the sea came up to the foot of the *Sukhién*, or Ghaut mountains; and that it once did so he thinks extremely probable from the nature of the soil, and the quantity of sand, oyster-shells, and other fragments, met with in making deep excavations.

2d. From the Perumbura to Poodumputtum was called the *Moshek Rauje*.

3d. From Poodum, or Poodputtun, to the limits of Kunetui, was called the *Kerul* or *Keril Rauje*; and as the principal seat of the ancient government was fixed in this middle division of Malabar, its name prevailed over, and was in course of time understood in a general sense to comprehend the three others.

4th. From Kunety to Kunea Koomary, or Cape Comorin, was called the *Koop Rauje*; and these four grand divisions were parcelled out into a greater number of *Naadhs*, (pronounced *Naars*, and meaning districts or countries,) and of *Kbunds*, or subdivisions, under the latter denomination.

IV. The proportion of the produce of their lands, that the *Brábmens* are stated to have originally assigned for the support of government, amounted to only one sixth share: but in the same book of *Kerul Oodputtee* they are afterwards said to have divided the country into three equal proportions; one of which was consecrated to supply the expence attending religious worship, another for the support of government, and the third for their own maintenance.

V. However this may be, according to the book above quoted, the *Brábmens* appear to have first set up, and for some time maintained, a sort of republican or aristocratical government, under two or three principal chiefs, elected to administer the government, which was thus carried on (attended, however, with several intermediate modifications) till, on jealousies arising among themselves, the great body of the *Brábmens* landholders had recourse to foreign assistance, which terminated, either by conquest or convention, in their receiving to rule over them a *Permal*, or chief governor, from the Prince of the neighbouring country