

XXVI.

A DISSERTATION ON SEMIRAMIS,

THE ORIGIN OF MECCA, &c.

From the Hindu Sacred Books.

BY LIEUT. FRANCIS WILFORD.

IN the *Scánda-purána* and *Vis'va-sára pracása*, or declaration of what is most excellent in the world, we find the following legends, which have an evident relation to the origin of *Semiramis*, the *Syrian dove*, *Ninus*, and the building of *Niniveh*, *Hierapolis*, and *Mecca*, &c.

MAHA'-DE'VA and his consort PA'RVATI, with a view to do good to mankind, quitted their divine abode on *Cailasa*, and proceeding towards the north, alighted on the summit of the *Nisháda* mountains, where they found the *Devátas* ready to receive them, with a numerous retinue of *Celestial Nymphs*, and *Heavenly Quiristers*. MAHA'-DE'VA was so struck with the beauty of some of the *Apsaras*, and his looks were so expressive of his internal raptures, that PA'RVATI, unable to conceal her indignation, uttered the most virulent reproaches against him. Conscious of the impropriety of his behaviour, MAHA'-DE'VA used every endeavour to pacify her; he humbled himself; he praised her, and addressed her by the

the flattering appellation of MAHA'-BHA'GA; but to no purpose. She fled into *Cuska-duîp*, on the mountains of *Vabni-vyápta*, and seating herself in the hollow trunk of a *Samî*-tree, performed *Tapasyá*, (or austere devotion) for the space of nine years; when fire springing from her, pervaded with rapid violence the whole range of mountains, in so much, that men and animals were terrified, and fled with the utmost precipitation. DE'VI, unwilling that her devotion should prove a cause of distress to the animal creation, recalled the sacred flame, and confined it in the *Samî*-tree. She made the hollow of that tree her place of abode and dalliance; and hence she is called SAMI-RA'MA', or she who dallies in the *Samî*-tree.

THE fugitives returning, performed the *Pujà* in adoration of her, with songs in her praise. The flame confined in the *Samî*-tree still remains in it; and the *Devátás* are highly delighted with the fire, which is lighted from the *Aranî* (or cubic wood of that tree.) The *Aranî* is the mother of fire, and is produced from the *Samî*-tree. From that time, this sacred tree gives an increase of virtue, and bestows wealth and corn. In the month of *As'wina*, or *Cooar*, the tenth of the first fifteen days of the moon is kept holy, and *Pujà* is made to SAMI-RA'MA' and to the *Samî*-tree; and those who perform it obtain the object of their desires. This sacred rite I have hitherto kept concealed from the world, says MAHA'DE'VA, but now I make it known for the good of mankind; and whosoever performs it will be victorious over his enemies for the space of one year.

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DURING these transactions, VI'SVE'SWARA-MAHA'-DE'VA, or CA'SI'-PATI (that is to say, MAHA'-DE'VA, the lord of the world and sovereign of *Cás'i* or *Benares*) visited the country of PURUSHOTAMA, in *Ucola-dé-sa* or *Orissa*; which he was surprized to find overspread with long grass, and without inhabitants. He resolved to destroy the long grass, and for this purpose, assuming the diminutive shape of a dove, with an angry countenance, commenced the performance *Tapasyà*; his consort DE'VI' also transformed herself into a bird of the same species; and from that time they were known to mankind, and worshipped under the titles of CAPO'TE'SWARA and CAPO'TE'SI' or ISWARA and ISI', in the shape of a dove. They set fire to the *Cusba*, or long grass, and the country became like *Vindra-van* near (*Muttra*) and was soon filled with inhabitants. The spot where they performed their *Tapasyà*, is called to this day *Capóta-si'hali*, or the place of the dove. It is a celebrated place of worship, and, as I am informed, about five coss from *Jagannát'ha*.

ALMOST the whole universe was likewise at this time overspread with long grass; and to destroy it, MAHA'-DE'VA, with his consort, resolved to travel round the world. They accordingly proceeded into *Cusba-duïp*, which they found thinly inhabited by a few *Mlech'bas*, or impure tribes, and the *Yavanas*, who concealed their booty in the grass which covered the country.

MAHA'-DE'VA took compassion on them, and considering their sufferings in this inhospitable country as a sort of *Tapasyá*, he resolved to bestow *Mócsba*,
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or eternal bliss, on them: for this purpose he assumed the character and countenance of MO'CSHE'SWARA or ISWARA, who bestows *Mócsba*; and directed his consort CAPO'TE'SI, who is also called *Mabá-bhága*, to go to *Vabni-st'hán*, on the borders of *Cusba-duípa*; there to make *Tapasyà*, in order to destroy the long grass. Accordingly she went into *Vabni-st'hán*; and that she might effect it without trouble to herself, she assumed another form: from which circumstance she was named ANA'YA'SA'. In this character she seated herself on a beautiful hill, and there made *Tapasyà* for many days. At last fire sprung from her devotion, and its presiding power standing before her, she directed him to destroy the *Cusba*; when the hills were soon in a blaze, and the *Yavanas* and other *Mléch'has* obtaining *Mócsba*, were reunited to the Supreme Being, without labour or effect on their part; that is to say, they were involved in the general conflagration and destroyed.

WHEN the grass was consumed, ANA'YA'SA ordered the clouds to gather and pour their waters on the land, which was soon overflowed. The waters then retired, and the four great tribes came into *Cusba-duíp*, where they soon formed a powerful nation, and became rich and happy. After the conflagration, all sorts of metals and precious stones were found throughout the country. The countenance of ANA'YA'SA'-DE'VI is that of fire; and a most divine form it is.

THE inhabitants soon after deviating from the paths of rectitude, became like the *Mléch'has*: and the *Yavanas* re-entered *Cusba-duíp*, plundering and laying waste the whole country. The four tribes applied to

ANA'YA'SA'

ANA'YA'SA', offered praises to her, and requested she would protect them against the *Yavanas*, and dwell among them. MAHA'-BHA'GA' assented, and the spot which she chose for her abode, is called *Mahá-bhágá-st'hán*, or the place of MAHA'-BHA'GA'.

IN the mean time MAHA'-DE'VA was at *Mócsba-st'hán*, or *Mócsbésa*, bestowing *Mócsba* on all who came to worship there. It is a most holy place; and there MAHA'-DE'VA laid aside the countenance and shape of CAPOTE'SWARA, and assumed that of MOCSHE'WARA.

AMONG the first votaries of MAHA'-DE'VA, who repaired to *Mócsba-st'hán*, was VI'RASE'NA, the son of GUHYACA. He had been making *Tapasyà* for a long time, in honour of MAHA'-DE'VA, who at last appeared to him, and made him king over *St'hávaras*, or the immoveable part of the creation. Hence he was called ST'HA'VARA-PATI; and the hills, trees, plants, and grasses of every kind were ordered to obey him. His native country was near the sea; and he began his reign with repressing the wicked, and insisting on all his subjects walking in the paths of justice and rectitude. In order to make his sovereign acknowledged throughout the world, he put himself at the head of a numerous army; and directing his course towards the north, he arrived at *Mócsba-st'hán*, where he performed the *Pujà* in honour of MO'CSHE'SWARA, according to the rites prescribed in the sacred books. From *Mócsbésa* he advanced towards the *Agni-párvatas*, or fire-mountains, in *Vabnist'hán*; but they refused to meet him with presents, and to pay tribute to him. Incensed at their insolence, ST'HA'VAR-PATI resolved to de-

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stroy them ; the officers on the part of SAMI'-RA'MA', the sovereign of *Vabnist'bán*, assembled all their troops, and met the army of ST'HA'VAR-PATI ; but after a bloody conflict, they were put to flight.

SAMI'-RA'MA' amazed, enquired who this new conqueror was ; and soon reflected that he could never have prevailed against her, without a boon from MAHA'-DE'VA, obtained by the means of what is called *Ugra-Tapasyá*, or a *Tapasyá* performed with fervor, earnestness of desire, and anger. She had a conference with ST'HA'VAR-PATI ; and as he was, through his *Tapasyá*, become a son of MAHA'-DE'VA, she told him she considered him in that light, and would allow him to command over all the hills, trees, and plants in *Vabni-st'bán*. The hills then humbled themselves before ST'HA'VAR-PATI, and paid tribute to him.

THE origin of NINUS is thus related in the same sacred books. One day, as MAHA'-DE'VA was rambing over the earth naked, and with a large club in his hand, he chanced to pass near the spot where several *Munis* were performing their devotions. MAHA'-DE'VA laughed at them, insulted them in the most provoking and indecent terms ; and lest his expressions should not be forcible enough, he accompanied the whole with significant signs and gestures. The offended *Munis* cursed him, and the *Linga* or *Phallus* fell to the ground. MAHA'-DE'VA, in this state of mutilation, travelled over the world, bewailing his misfortune. His consort too, hearing of this accident, gave herself up to grief, and ran after him in a state of distraction, repeating mournful songs. This is what the *Greek* mythologists

mythologists called the Wanderings of DEMATER, and the Lamentations of BACCHUS.

THE world being thus deprived of its vivifying principle, generation and vegetation were at a stand; Gods and men were alarmed; but having discovered the cause of it, they all went in search of the sacred *Linga*; and at last found it grown to an immense size, and endowed with life and motion.

HAVING worshipped the sacred pledge, they cut it, with hatchets, into one-and-thirty pieces, which *Polypus*-like, soon became perfect *Lingas*. The *Devatas* left one-and-twenty of them on earth; carried nine into Heaven, and removed one into the inferior regions, for the benefit of the inhabitants of the three worlds. One of these *Lingas* was erected on the banks of the *Cumud-vati*, or *Euphrates*, under the name of BA'LE'SWARA-LINGA, or the *Linga* of ISWARA *the Infant*, who seems to answer to the JUPITER PUER of the western mythologists. To satisfy DE'VI, and restore all things to their former situation, MAHA'-DE'VA' was born again in the character of BALE'SWA'RA, or ISWARA *the Infant*. BALE'SWA'RA, who fosters and preserves all, though a child, was of uncommon strength; he had a beautiful countenance; his manners were most engaging; and his only wish was to please every body; in which he succeeded effectually; but his subjects waited with impatience till he came to the age of maturity, that he might bless them with an heir to his virtues. BALE'SWA'RA, to please them, threw off his childlike appearance, and suddenly became a man, under the title of LI'LE'SWARA, or ISWARA, who gives
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pleasure and delight. He then began to reign over Gods and men, with the strictest adherence to justice and equity: his subjects were happy, and the women beheld with extacy his noble and manly appearance. With the view of doing good to mankind, he put himself at the head of a powerful army, and conquered many distant countries, destroying the wicked, and all oppressors. He had the happiness of his subjects and of mankind in general so much at heart, that he entirely neglected every other pursuit. His indifference for the female sex alarmed his subjects: he endeavoured to please them; but his embraces were fruitless. This is termed *Asc'balana* in *Sanscrit*; and the place where this happened was in consequence denominated *Asc'balanst'hán*. The *Apsaras*, or celestial nymphs, tried in vain the effect of their charms. At last SAMI-RA'MA' came to *Asc'balanst'hán*, and retiring into a solitary place in its vicinity, chanted her own metamorphoses and those of LI'LE'SWARA, who happening to pass by, was so delighted with the sweetness of her voice, that he went to her and enquired who she was. She related to him how they went together into *Utoladésa* in the characters of the CAPO'TESWARA and CAPOTE'SI: adding, you appeared then as MOCHE'SWA'RA, and I became ANAY'ASA; you are now *Liléswara*, and I am *Sàmi-Ràmà*, but I shall be soon *Liléswarì*. LI'LE'SWARA, being under the influence of MA'YA, or worldly illusion, did not recollect any of these transactions; but suspecting that the person he was speaking to might be a manifestation of PA'RVATI, he thought it adviseable to marry her; and having obtained her consent,

consent, he seized her hand, and led her to the performance of the nuptial ceremony, to the universal satisfaction of his subjects. Gods and men met to solemnize this happy union; and the celestial nymphs and heavenly quiristers graced it with their presence. Thus SAMI-RA'MA' and LI'LE'SWARA commenced their reign, to the general satisfaction of mankind, who were happy under their virtuous administration.

FROM that period the three worlds began to know and worship LI'LE'SWARA, who after he had conquered the universe, returned into *Cusba-duîpa*. LI'LE'SWARA having married SAMI-RA'MA', lived constantly with her, and followed her wherever she chose to go: in whatever pursuits and pastimes she delighted, in these alone he took pleasure; thus they travelled over hills and through forests to distant countries; but at last returned to *Cusba-duîp*: and SAMI-RA'MA' seeing a delightful grove near the *Hradancità* (or deep water) with a small river of the same name, expressed a wish that he would fix the place of their residence in this beautiful spot, there to spend their days in pleasure.

THIS place became famous afterwards, under the name of *Lila-st'hân*, or the place of delight. The water of the *Hradancità* is very limpid and abounds with *Camala*-flowers, or *red Lotos*.

SAMI-RA'MA' is obviously the SEMIRAMIS of the western mythologists, whose appellation is derived from the *Sanscrit* SAMI-RA'ME'SI', or ISI' (*Isis*) dallying in the *Sami*, or Fir-tree. The title of SAMI'-RAME'SI is not to be found in the *Puránás*; but it is more grammatical than the other; and it is abso-
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lutely necessary to suppose the word *Isi'* or *Esi'* in composition, in order to make it intelligible.

DIODORUS SICULUS* informs us that she was born at *Ascalon*: the *Puránás*, that her first appearance in *Syria* was at *Asc'balana-st'hán*, or the place where *LI'LE'SIA* or *NINUS* had *Asc'balana*.

THE defeat of **SEMIRAMIS** by **STAUROBATES**, is recorded in the *Puránás* with still more extravagant circumstances; for **STAUROBATES** is obviously *ST'HA'VARA-PATI*, or *ST'HA'WARA-PATI*, as it is more generally pronounced.

THE places of worship mentioned in the above legends are *Mócsbésa* or *Mócsba-st'hán*, *Asc'hala-st'hán* or *Asc'balana-st'hán*, two places of the name of *Lila-st'hán* or *Lilésa-st'hán*, *Anáyásá-déví-st'hán* and *Ma-bá-bhágá-st'hán*.

THE *Bráhmens* in the western parts of *India*, insist that *Mócsba-st'hán* is the present town of *Mecca*. The word *Mócsba* is always pronounced in the vulgar dialects, either *Moca* or *Mucta*; and the author of the *Dabistan* says, its ancient name was *Maca*. We find it called *Maco Raba*, by **PTOLEMY**, or *MOCA the Great* or *Illustrious*. **GUY PATIN** mentions a medal of **ANTONINUS PIUS** with this legend, “*MOK. IEP. AXY. AYTO.*” which he very properly translates *Moca, sacra, inviolabilis, suis utens legibus*, “*Moca the holy, the inviolable, and using her own laws.*” This, in my humble opinion, is applicable only to *Mecca*, or *Mócsba-st'hán*, which the *Puránás* describe as a most holy place. The *Arabian* authors unanimously confirm the truth of

* **DIODORUS SICULUS**, lib. 3. cap. 2.

the above legend; and it is ridiculous to apply it to an obscure and insignificant place in *Arabia Petrea*, called also *Moca*. It may be objected, that it does not appear that *Mecca* was ever a *Roman* colony. I do not believe it ever was; but at the same time it was possible that some connection for commercial purposes might have existed between the rulers of *Mecca* and the *Romans* in *Egypt*. The learned are not ignorant that the *Romans* boasted a little too much of their progress in *Arabia*; and even medals were struck with no other view, apparently, but to impose on the multitude at *Rome*. It is unfortunate that we do not meet in the *Puránás* with the necessary *data* to ascertain, beyond doubt, the situation of *Mocshea*. From the particulars contained in them, however, it appears to have been situated a great way to the westward, with respect to *India*, and not from *Egypt* and *Ethiopia*, as has been shewn in a former dissertation on these countries, and in the third volume of the *Asiatic Researches*.

It is declared in the *Puránás* that *CAPO'TE'SWARA* and his consort *CAPO'TE'SI*, in the shape of two doves, remained there for some time; and *Arabian* authors inform us, that in the time of *MOHAMMED*, there was in the temple of *Mecca* a pigeon carved in wood, and another above this: to destroy which, *MOHAMMED* lifted *ALI* upon his shoulders. These pigeons were most probably placed there in commemoration of the arrival of *MAHA'-DE'VA* and *DE'VI*, in the shape of two doves.

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THE worship of the dove seems to have been peculiar to *India, Arabia, Syria, and Assyria*. We read of SEMIRAMIS being fed by doves in the desert; and of her vanishing at last from the sight of men, in the shape of a dove; and according to the *Puránás*, CAPO'TE'SI, or the dove, was but a manifestation of SAMI-RA'MA'.

THE dove seems to have been in former times the device of the *Assyrian*, as the eagle was of the *Roman* empire; for we read in ISAIAH *, “ And the inhabitants of this country shall say in that day, such was our expectation! behold whither we wanted to fly for help from the face of the dove; but how could we have escaped ?”

I HAVE adhered chiefly to the translation of TREMELLIUS, which appears the most literal, and to be more expressive of the idea which the prophet wished to convey to the *Jews*, who wanted to fly to *Egypt* and *Ethiopia*, to avoid falling into the hands of the *Assyrians*; but were to be disappointed by the fall of these two empires.

ALL commentators have unanimously understood *Assyria* by the *Dove*, and have translated the above passage accordingly. CAPO'TE'SI, or the *Assyrian Dove*, was also mentioned in a song, current in these countries, and which seems to refer to some misfortune that had befallen the *Assyrians*. The 56th Psalm is directed to be sung to the tune of that song, which was known to every body; and for this purpose the

* ISAIAH, cap. xx. in fine.

first verse, as usual, is inserted. “*The dove of distant countries is now struck dumb.*”

THE *Hindus* further insist, that the *black stone* in the wall of the *Gaaba*, is no other than the *Linga* or *Phallus* of MAHA'-DEVA'; and that when the *Caaba* was rebuilt by MOHAMMED, (as they affirm it to have been) it was placed in the wall, out of contempt; but the new converted pilgrims would not give up the worship of the *black stone*; and sinister portents forced the ministers of the new religion to connive at it. *Arabian* authors also inform us that *stones* were worshipped all over *Arabia*, particularly at *Mecca*; and AL-SHAH-RESTANI* says, that the temple at *Mecca* was dedicated to ZOHAL or KYEVUN, who is the same with SATURN. The author of the *Dabistan* declares positively that the *Hejar al aswad*, or the *black stone*, was the image of KYEVUN. Though these accounts somewhat differ from those in the *Puránás*, yet they shew that this *black stone* was the object of an idolatrous worship from the most remote times.

THE *Mussulmans*, in order to palliate their idolatry towards it, have contrived other legends. KYEVUN is the CHYUN of Scripture, also called REMPHAN, which is interpreted the *God of Time*. If so, CHYUN, or KYEVUN, must be MAHA'-DE'VA, called also MAHA'-CA'LA, a denomination of the same import with REMPHAN; the *Egyptians* called HORUS, the lord of time; and HORUS is the same with HARA, or MAHA'-DE'VA †.

* SALE'S *Koran*.

† See Dissertation on *Egypt*, &c. in the third volume of the *Asiatic Researches*.

THE reason of this tradition is, that the *Sabians*, who worshipped the seven planets, seem to have considered SATURN as the lord of time, on account of the length of its periodical revolution; and it appears from the *Dabistan*, that some ancient tribes in *Persia* had contrived a cycle of years, consisting of the revolution of SATURN repeatedly multiplied by itself.

ASC'HALA-ST'HA'N, or *Asc'balana-st'hán*, is obviously *Ascalon*; there SEMIRAMIS was born, according to DIODORUS SICULUS, or, according to the *Puránás*, there she made her first appearance.

MAHA'-BHA'GA'-ST'HA'N is the *st'hán* or place of SAMI'-RA'MA', in the characters of MAHA-BHA'GA', or the great and prosperous goddess. This implies also that she bestowed greatness and prosperity to her votaries.

WE cannot but suppose that the *st'hán* of MAHA'-BHA'GA' is the ancient town of *Mabog* called now *Menbigz* and *Menbig*; the *Greeks* called it *Hierapolis*, or the holy city: it was a place of great antiquity; and there was a famous temple dedicated to the *Syrian* goddess, whose statue of gold was placed in the center, between those of JUPITER and JUNO. It had a golden dove on its head; hence some supposed it was designed for SEMIRAMIS, and it was twice every year carried to the sea-side in procession. This statue was obviously that of the great goddess, or MAHA'BHA'GA'-DEVI', whose history is intimately connected with that of the *Dove* in the western mythologists, as well as in the *Puránás*.

AN ancient author * thus relates her origin: “ di-
 “ citur et *Euphratis* fluvio ovum piscis *Columba* adse-
 “ disse dies plurimos, et exclusisse *Deam benignam* et
 “ misericordem hominibus ad *bonam vitam.*” “ It
 “ is related that a *Dove* hatched the egg of a fish,
 “ near the *Euphrates*, and that after many days of in-
 “ cubation came forth the *Goddess*, *merciful* and *pro-*
 “ *pitious* to men, on whom she bestows eternal bliss.”
 Others say that fishes rolled an egg upon dry land,
 where it was hatched by a *Dove*, after which appear-
 ed the *Syrian Goddess*.

HER origin is thus related in the *Puránás*: The
Yavanas having for a long time vexed the inhabitants
 of *Cusba-duíp*, they at last applied for protection to
 MA'HA'-BHA'GA'-DE'VI, who had already appeared
 in that country in the characters of SAMI-RA'MA'
 and CAPOTE'SI', or ISI', in the shape of a *Dove*; they
 requested also that she would vouchsafe to reside a-
 mongst them. The merciful Goddess granted their
 request; and the place where she made her abode
 was called the *st'-bán*, or place of *Mábá-bhágá*.

THE *Syrian* name of *Mabog* is obviously derived
 from MAHA'-BHA'GA'. This contraction is not un-
 common in the western dialects, derived from the
Sanscrit; and HESYCHIUS informs us that the Greeks
 pronounced the *Hindu* word *Mabá* great, *Mai*. *Mabog*
 is mentioned by PLINY, where we read *Magog*; but
 Mr. DANVILLE shews that it should be *Mabog*: I
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* LUCIUS AMPELIUS ad MACRIN.

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confirmed by its present name, which is to this day *Manbig* or *Manbeg*. We find it also called *Bambukeb* (*Βαμβυκη*) *Bambyce*; and in NIEBUHR'S Travels it is called *Bombädsche*: I suppose for *Bombäksche* or *Mombigz*: but this is equally corrupted from *Ma'ábbágá*. In the same manner we say *Bombay* for *Momba*; and what is called in *India Bambu* or *Pambu*, is called *Mambu* in *Thibet*.

THE temple of *Mabog* was frequented by all nations; and amongst them were pilgrims from *India*, according to LUCIAN, as cited by the author of the *Ancient Universal History*.

MABOG, or *Hierapolis*, was called also *Old Ninus*, or *Niniveh*, according to AMMIANUS MARCELLINUS, and PHILOSTRATUS: and there is no mistake in DIODORUS SICULUS and CTESIUS, when they assert that there was a town called *Niniveh* near the *Euphrates*. Scripture also seems to place *Niniveh* thereabout; for it is said that *Rezen* was between *Niniveh* and *Calach*. And the situation of *Rezen*, called also *Resaina*, by ancient authors, and *Razain* by the moderns, is well known, as well as that of *Calach* on the banks of the *Lycus*, now the *Zab*, to the eastward of the *Tigris*. *Niniveh*, of course, must have been to the westward of these two places, and falls where the *Old Ninus* is pointed out by AMMIANUS, PHILOSTRATUS, &c.

Two places of that name are mentioned in the *Puránás*, under the name of *Lílast'hán*, the *st'hán* or place of LI'LE'SA or NINUS. There can be no doubt, in my humble opinion, of their identity; for SAMI'RA'MA' is obviously SEMIRAMIS. NINUS was the son of BELUS, and, according to the *Paránás* LI'LE'SA

sprung from BA'LE'SWARA, or BALESÄ; for both denominations, being perfectly synonymous, are indifferently used in the *Puránás*.

NINIVEH on the *Tigris*, seems to be the *si'hán* of LI'LE'SÄ, where he laid aside the shape and countenance of BA'LE'SÄ, and assumed that of LI'LE'SÄ. The other place of LILESÄ, which SAMI'-RA'MÄ, delighted with the beauty of the spot, chose for the place of her residence, is *Hierapolis*, called also *Ninus* or *Nineveh*: hence we find her statue in the temple of MAHA'-BHA'GÄ. It is said to have been situated near a deep pool, or small lake, called from that circumstance *Hradancitâ*; and the pool near the temple of *Hierapolis* was described to be two hundred fathoms deep. SAMI'-RA'MÄ is represented in a most amiable light in the *Puránás*, as well as her consort LILE'SWARA, or LILE'SÄ.

STEPHANUS of *Byzantium* says that NINUS lived at a place called *Telané*, previous to his buiding *Niniveh*; but this place, I believe, is not mentioned by any other author.

NINUS is with good reason supposed to be the ASSUR of Scripture, who built *Niniveh*; and ASSUR is obviously the IS'WARA of the *Puránás*, with the title of LI'LE'SWARA, LI'LESÄ, or NINUS. The word IS'WARA, though generally applied to deities, is also given in the *Puránás* to Kings; it signifies *Lord* and *Sovereign*.

WITH respect to the monstrous origin of BE'LE'SÄ, and the thirty-one *Phalli*; my *Pandit*, who is an astronomer suspects it to be an attempt to reconcile the course of the moon to that of the sun, by divid-
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ing the synodical revolution into thirty-one parts, which may represent also three hundred and ten years. As this correction is now disused, he could give me no further information concerning it. To the event related is ascribed the origin of the *Linga* or *Phallus*, and of its worship: it is said to have happened on the banks of the *Cumud-vati*, or *Euphrates*; and the first *Phallus*, under the name of *Baleswara-Linga*, was erected on its banks. This is confirmed by DIODORUS SICULUS, who says that SEMIRAMUS brought an *Obelisk* from the mountains of *Armenia*, and erected it in the most conspicuous part of *Babylon*: it was 150 feet high, and is reckoned, by some author, as one of the seven wonders of the world*. The *Jews* in their *Talmud* allude to something of this kind; speaking of the different sorts of earths, of which the body of ADAM was formed, they say that the earth which composed his generative parts, was brought from *Babylonia*.

THE next place of worship is the *st'ban* of ANA'YA'-SA-DE'VI': this is obviously the ^{Ἱερον τῆς Αναίας} *Anaias* (*Heiron tes Anaias*) of STRABO, or the temple of the goddess ANAIA, or ANAIAS, with its burning spring of NAPHTHA. They are upon a hillock, called *Corcura* by the antients, and now known by the name of *Corcoor*: it is near *Kerkook*, and to the eastward of the *Tigris*. To this day it is visited by pilgrims from *India*; and I have been fortunate enough to meet with four or five who had paid their devotions in this holy place. I consult-

* DIOD. SIC. lib. 3. cap. 4.

ed them separately, and their accounts were as satisfactory as could be expected. They call it *Juálámuc'hí*, or the flaming mouth.

THIS conflagration is minutely described by DIODORUS SICULUS *, who says, that in former times a monster called *ALCIDA*, who vomited flames, appeared in *Phrygia*; hence spreading along mount *Taurus*, the conflagration burnt down all the woods, as far as *India*: then, with a retrograde course, swept the forests of mount *Liban*, and extended as far as *Egypt* and *Africa*: at last a stop was put to it by *MINERVA*.

THE *Phrygians* remembered well this conflagration and the flood which followed it; but as they could not conceive that it could originate from a benevolent Goddess, they transformed her into a monster, called *ALCIDA*. *Alcida* however is an old *Greek* word, implying strength and power, and is therefore synonymous with *Sácá* or *Sáctá-devi*, the principal form of *SA'MI'-RA'MA'*, and other manifestations of the female power of nature.

INDEED the names and titles of most of the *Babylonian* deities are pure *Sanscrit*: and many of them are worshipped to this day in *India*, or at least their legends are to be found in the *Puránás*.

THUS *SEMIRAMIS* is derived from *Samí-Rámési*, or *Sámí-Ramá*, and *Samí-Rámá-dévi*.

MILITTA from *Militia-Devi*, because she brings people together (*Connuba*).

* DIOD. SIC. lib. 4. cap. 5.

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SHACKA, or *Saca*, is from the *Sanscrit Sácta-dévi*, pronounced *Sácá* in the vulgar dialects: it implies strength and power.

SLAMBA, or *Salambo*, is from *Sarwámbá*, often pronounced *Salwámbá*: it signifies the mother of all: and she is the *Magna Mater* of the western mythologists.

DE'VI is called also *A'ntargati*, or *Antargatá*, because she resides within the body, or in the heart, and thereby gives strength and courage. This is the Goddess of Victory in *India*, and they have no other: it is declared in the *Puránás*, that she was called A'N-TRAST'HI (a title of the same import with the former) in the forests of *Vishála-van*, on the banks of the river *Tamasa*, in *Chándra-duíp*: from *A'ntrast'hi* the old Britons, or rather the Romans, made *Andraste*.

THE *Babylonian* Goddess was called also the *Queen of Heaven*; and to this day a form of DEVI, with the title of *Sverga rádni-dévi*, or DEVI, *Queen of Heaven*, is worshipped in *India*.

RHEA is from *Hriyá-devi*, or the bashful or modest Goddess.

RAKH is from *Rácéswara*: a name of LUNUS, from one of his favourite wives called *Raca*: it signifies also the full orb of the Moon.

NABO, or NEBO, is I'SWARA, with the title of *Nava*, or *Naba*, the celestial.

NARGAL is from *Anargaléswara*; that is, he who is independent.

ADRAM-MELECH is from *A'dbarm-eswara*; for
I'SWARA

I'SWARA and MELECH, in the *Chaldean* language, are synonymous.

ADHARME'SWARA is thus called, because he punishes those who deviate from the paths of justice and rectitude.

ANAM-MELECH is from *Anam-éswara* or I'sWARA, who, though above all, behaves to all with meekness and affability.

NIMROD is from *Níma-Rudra*, because RUDRA or MAHA'-DE'VA gave him half of his own strength.

VAHNI-ST'HA'N, called also *Agni-st'hán* is said in some *Puránás* to be in *Cusha-duíp*; and in others, to be on the borders of it. It includes all the mountainous country from *Pbrygia* to *Herat*. *Vabni-st'hán* and *Agni-st'hán* are denominations of the same import, and signify the country or seat of fire, from the numerous volcanoes and burning springs which are to be found all along this extensive range of mountains. The present *Azar-Báiján* is part of it, and may be called *Vabni-st'hán* proper. *Azar*, in the old *Persian*, signifies fire; and *Báiján*, a mine or spring. This information was given to me by Mr. DUNCAN, resident of *Benares*, who was so kind as to consult on this subject with MEHDI-ALI-KHA'N, one of the *Aumils* of the *Zemindary* of *Benares*. He is a native of *Khorassan*, and well acquainted with the antiquities of his own country, and of *Iran* in general. According to him, the principal *Báiján*, or spring of fire, is at a place called *Baut-Cubeh**, in *Azar-Báiján*. *Vabni-*

* It is vulgarly called *Baku*.

st'bán is called also *Vabni-vyápta*, from the immense quantity of fire collected in that country. There are many places of worship remaining throughout *Iran*, still resorted to by devout pilgrims. The principal are *Balk* and the *Pyraem*, near *Herat*. *Hingláz*, or *Anclooje*, near the sea, and about eighty miles from the mouth of the *Indus*: it is now deserted; but there remain twenty-four temples of *BHAVA'NI*. This place, however, is seldom visited, on account of the difficulties attending the journey to it.

GANGA'WA'Z, near *Congo*, on the *Persian Gulph*, another place of pilgrimage, where are many caves, with springs in the mountains.

THE *st'bán* of *CALYA'NA-RA'YA* and *GOVINDA-RA'YA*, two incarnations of *VISHNU*, is in the centre of *Bussora*, on the banks of the *Euphrates*; and there are two statues carefully concealed from the sight of the *Mussulmans*.

ANA'YA'SA'-DE'VI-ST'HA'N has been already mentioned; and the great *Juálá-muc'bi* is the designation of the springs of *Naphtba*, near *Baku*.

THERE is also another *Hindu* place of worship at *Baharein* (*El Katif*) and another at *Astrachan*, where the few *Hindus* who live there worship the *Volga*, under the name of *SU'RYA-MUC'HI'-GANGA*; the legends relating to this famous river are to be found in the *Puránás*, and confirm the information of the pilgrims who have visited these holy places. There are still many *Hindus* dispersed through that immense country; they are unknown to the *Mussulmans*; and they pass for *Guebris*, as they call them here, or

Parsis.

Parfis. There is now at *Benares* a *Bráhma*n of the name of *DE'VI-DA'S*, who is a native of *Mesched*; he was introduced lately to my acquaintance by Mr. *DUNCAN*; and he informed me that it was supposed there were about 2000 families of *Hindus* in *Khorassan*; that they called themselves *Hindi*, and are known to the *Mussulmans* of the country under that appellation.

THIS, in my opinion, accounts for the whole country to the south of the *Caspian* sea, from *Khorassan* and *Arrokbage*, as far as the *Black Sea* being called *India* by the antients; and its inhabitants in various places *Sindi*: it is implicitly confirmed by the *Puránás*, in which it is said that the *Súrya-muc'hí-Gángá*, or *Volga*, falls into the *Sea of Sind*. The *Hindus* near *Baku* and at *Astrachan*, call it the *new sea*, because they say it did not exist formerly. They have legends about it, which, however, my learned friend *VIDHYA'-NA'TH* could not find in the *Puránás*.

ACCORDING to the pilgrims I have consulted, there are about twenty or thirty families of *Hindus* at *Balk*; and *EUSEBIUS* informs us, that there were *Hindus* in *Bactriana* in his time. There are as many families at *Gángáwáz*, or *Congo*; about one hundred at *Buffora*; and a few at *Babarein*: these informed *PURA'-NA'-PURI'*, a *Yóyí* and famous traveller, called also *URD'HWABA'HU*, because he always keeps his hands elevated above his head, that formerly they corresponded and traded with other *Hindus* on the banks of the river *Níla*, in the country of *Misr*; and that they had once a house or factory at *Cairo*; but
that,

that, on account of the oppression of the *Turks* and the roving *Arabs*, there had been no intercourse between them for several generations. There are no *Hindus* at *Anáyásâdévi*, or *Corcoor*; but they compute a large number in the vicinity of *Baku*, and *Derbend*. The *Sbroffs* at *Sámákhi* are *Banyans* or *Hindus*, according to the Dictionary of Commerce, and of *Trevoux*, as cited in the *French Encyclopædia**.

THE *Cubánis* who live near *Derbend*, are *Hindus*, as my friend PURANA-PURI was told at *Baku* and *Astrachan*, in his way to *Moscow*; and their *Bráhmens* are said to be very learned; but, as he very properly observed, this ought to be understood relatively on a comparison with the other *Hindus* in *Persia*, who are extremely ignorant.

HIS relation is in a great measure confirmed by STRAHLENBERG, who calls them *Cuba* and *Cubatzin*; and says that they live near *Derbend*, and are a distinct people, supposed to be *Jews*, and to speak still the *Hebrew* language.

THE *Sanscrit* characters might easily be mistaken for the black *Hebrew* letters by superficial observers, or persons little conversant in subjects of this nature.

THE *Araní*, figuratively called the daughter of the SAMI-tree, and the mother of fire, is a cubic piece of wood about five inches in diameter, with a small hole in the upper part. A stick of the same sort of wood is placed in this cavity, and put in motion by a string held by two men, or fixed to a bow. The friction

* Ad vocem *Cheraffs*.

soon produces fire, which is used for all religious purposes, and also for dressing food. Every *Brahmen* ought to have an *Aranî*; and when they cannot procure one from the *SAMI'*-tree, which is rather scarce in this part of *India*, they make it with the wood of the *Asvatt'ba*, or *Pippala*-tree. This is also a sacred tree, and they distinguish two species of it; the *Pippala*, called in the vulgar dialects *Pipal*, and the *Chalat-palasha*. The leaves of this last are larger, but the fruit is smaller, and not so numerous as in the former species. It is called *Chalat-palasha*, from the tremulous motion of its leaves. It is very common in the hills; and the vulgar name for it is *Pópala*; from which I suppose is derived the *Latin* word *Populus*; for it is certainly the trembling *Poplar* or *Aspen*-tree.

THE festival of *SIMIRAMIS* falls always on the tenth day of the lunar month of *Aswina*, which this year coincided with the fourth of *October*. On this day lamps are lighted in the evening under the *Sami*-tree; offerings are made of rice and flowers, and sometimes strong liquors; the votaries sing the praise of *SAMI'-RAMA'-DEVI'* and the *Sami*-tree; and having worshipped them, carry away some of the leaves of the tree, and earth from the roots, which they keep carefully in their houses till the return of the festival of *SEMIRAMIS* in the ensuing year.

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XXVII.

ON THE ANDAMAN ISLANDS.

 BY LIEUT. R. H. COLEBROOKE.

THE *Andaman* islands are situated on the eastern side of the bay of *Bengal**, extending from north latitude $10^{\circ} 32'$ to $13^{\circ} 40'$. Their longitude is from $92^{\circ} 6'$ to $92^{\circ} 59'$ east of *Greenwich*. The *Great Andaman*, or that portion of the land hitherto so called, is about one hundred and forty *British* miles in length, but not more than twenty in the broadest parts. Its coasts are indented by several deep bays, affording excellent harbours, and it is intersected by many vast inlets and creeks, one of which has been found to run quite through, and is navigable for

* It is perhaps a wonder, that islands so extensive, and lying in the track of so many ships, should have been, till of late years, so little known; that while the countries by which they are almost encircled, have been increasing in population and wealth, having been from time immemorial in a state of a tolerable civilization, these islands should have remained in a state of nature, and their inhabitants plunged in the grossest ignorance and barbarity.

THE wild appearance of the country, and the untractable and ferocious disposition of the natives, have been the causes, probably, which have deterred navigators from frequenting them; and they have justly dreaded a shipwreck at the *Andamans* more than the danger of foundering in the ocean; for although it is highly probable, that in the course of time many vessels have been wrecked upon their coasts, an instance does not occur of any of the crews being saved, or of a single person returning to give any account of such a disaster.