

placed the strictest part in the preservation of living creatures, and in abstaining from flesh, wine, &c. they were more particularly enjoined the keeping of these two commandments: tho' the posterity of Shuddery are under the same obligation.

The descendants of Shuddery were allotted to merchants; and it was more particularly enjoined this cast to be devout, and to refrain from all cozenage in their dealings, as expressed in the 3d and 4th commandments.

The race of Cuttery were appointed to be the cast of rulers or magistrates; and, because oppression is a sin most common among the powerful, they are commanded in the 5th and 6th commandments to be just, merciful, and charitable.

The generations of Wyse the youngest sons are all handy-craftsmen, and are more particularly concerned in the precepts of the 7th and 8th commandments, which lay a restraint upon idleness and theft.

Nevertheless all the casts are obliged to the observance of all these commandments: but they are more generally cautious in keeping the commandments appropriated to their own particular tribe.

The ceremonial law of these people is obligatory to all the casts. (1.) They frequently wash their bodies in rivers, in commemoration of the destruction brought upon the world by the flood, for wickedness and sin. On this occasion the Bramane pronounceth a kind of absolution, saying, *Oh, Lord, this person is polluted and filthy as the mud in the river; but the water thereof can make him clean; do thou also in like manner wash away his sins.* And the penitent, having plunged himself thrice in the river, offers certain grains of rice, and is dismissed with a benediction that his sins are forgiven.

(2.) They anoint their foreheads with a certain red unction, which, being stuck with certain grains, is a sign that God had marked them for his people; and, as this is intended purely to preserve the memory of their baptism, it is daily renewed, with certain prayers to put them in mind that they should live as become God's people.

(3.) They are enjoined to worship under green trees. In which places the Bramins erect temples to Pagods. Here they bring their offerings, receive unctions, pay their adorations, which they number by the clapper of a little bell: celebrate their festivals with great solemnity; and pray for health, riches, fruitfulness of issue, and for success in all their undertakings.

(4.) They use in their temples a form of prayer, consisting of a repetition of certain names of God paraphrased and explained: processions with loud tinkling of bells and singing, and also offer prayers and gifts to images.

(5.) They worship saints and invoke them for success in their several affairs, and are enjoined long pilgrimages to the river Ganges, &c.

(6.) Upon the first sight of any creature after the rising of the sun, they are commanded to glorify God. But they pay a more extraordinary devotion to the sun and moon, which they call the two eyes of God. And they pay a particular regard to some beasts, as to kine and buffaloes; to whom they attribute so much innocence and goodness by the souls of men entering into them, that they besmear the floors of their houses with their dung, and think the ground sanctified by such pollution.

(7.) When a child is to be named, one of its kindred, pointing a writing pen to the forehead of the child, prays, that God would write good things in the heart of that child; to which the congregation says, *Amen.* Then the child is named, and, after anointing its forehead with the red unction is dismissed. But, if it be a Bramin's child, it is not only washed with water, but anointed with oil also, the priest using these words of consecration, *O Lord we present unto thee this child born of a holy tribe, anointed with oil and cleansed with pure water.* Then they proceed with the other ceremonies, as above; and all join in prayer that he may live a righteous observer of the law of the Bramins. After this ceremony is over, they enquire out the exact time of the child's birth, and calculate his nativity, gathering by the aspect of the twelve signs of the heaven, the chances or mischances, that may befall him, and on the day of his marriage, and not before, publish the dangers past, and the conjectural evils to come in the sequel of the child's life.

(8.) The ceremonial of their marriages is very remarkable. For, as they account marriage one of the best actions of a man's life, it is ushered in, performed, and consummated in an extraordinary manner. To die unmarried is

thought a great misfortune, wherefore it is common for parents to propose the marriage of their children at seven years old. And when the parties contracting for their children have made known their intention, and have agreed upon the matter, the young virgin is visited by proper messengers who, with presents sent to her parents, and with trumpets and drums, and songs in praise of her beauty and other perfections, wait upon her in great form to ask her consent, and, if she accept of the presents, her parents return a complimentary to the youth by other messengers, who carry gifts to the bridegroom, and are ushered in with music and singing to his praise also. — The Bramins informed of this contract, appoint the day for solemnizing the marriage, and it is published to all the town by a solemn show for two days: on the first day the bridegroom, with a rich crown upon his head, attended by all the men's children of the same cast, clothed in their best attire, and otherwise adorned with jewels and scarfs, &c. some on horses, others in pallankins, and coaches, &c. makes the tour of the public streets in great nuptial pomp, preceded by kettle-drums, trumpets, and gilded pageants. On the next day the bride richly decked, crowned, and attended in like manner, makes her procession: and, towards evening they repair home, where the marriage ceremony is performed always at the setting of the sun, at which time a fire is made between the couple to be married, to intimate the ardency of their conjugal affections: then the Bramin, that officiates, incloseth them both with a silken cord round their bodies, to witness the indissoluble bond of wedlock, and that in marriage there ought to be no desertion or forsaking of one another; afterwards a cloth is held between them, to intimate that no one ought to make their nakedness known to another before marriage. Then the Bramin, enjoying the man to provide all things convenient to the woman, and charging the woman to be true to her marriage-bed, pronounceth a blessing of fruitful issue to them both. When this is finished, the cloth is taken away, the silken cord is unloosed, and the new married couple are permitted to enjoy each other.

It may be proper to observe further, that here is never given any dowry, except the jewels worn on the nuptial day, to prevent those mercenary unhappy marriages, too frequent in politer nations; and each other amongst themselves, but the cast of the handy-craftsmen, called the Wyfes, must marry only to one of their own trade: thus, a shoemaker's son may marry a shoemaker's daughter, &c. to keep the tribes and trades from mixing: nor may any woman, except of the cast of the Wyfes, be permitted to marry a second husband; but all men, except the Bramin, may marry a second wife.

In India are two sorts of Bramins, or people that discharge the priestly office among them. 1. A common sort, of whom there are great numbers. 2. A more particular sort, called Banians, who are not so numerous.

The common Banians divide themselves into eighty casts, according to the schools or sects to which they profess a subjection. And these, as they discharge their ministerial function, in praying with the people or reading their law, strain their bodies, into such mimical gestures, as may best engage the attention of the people; extend both their hands towards heaven, as ready to receive the things they pray for; fix their eyes downwards, and kneel upon their knees to express their fear and reverence; and they always read the law of Bremaw, their patriarch, with a kind of singing and voice of rejoicing.

[The Remainder in our next.]

YMN. to the Supreme.

HOW every y unworthy of thy love,
Great God, is erring man's plum'd with vain thoughts
Of self approving science, proud he deems
Himself, poor worm, sufficient; yet how blind,
How lost, how impotent are all his ways?
What wou'd he boast,—knowledge? yet behold,
How small the Circle that contains the sum
The very wisest dare pretend to know!
And even the poor short present is our all
Of certainty, the rest, conjecture, night,
And dim imagination! why contend
Tongue-doughty disputants? why vainly strive
To shew us human pride with fullest glare,
In the broad glass of human ignorance?