

THE
TRIBES
INHABITING THE
Deilgherry Hills;
THEIR SOCIAL CUSTOMS

AND
RELIGIOUS RITES:

FROM THE

ROUGH NOTES OF A GERMAN MISSIONARY.

Johann Friedrich Metz (1819-1895), German missionary, among Todas 1847-1871

EDITED BY A FRIEND.

~~~~~  
MADRAS:

1856.

THE  
NELLGHERRIES,  
AND THEIR  
INHABITANTS.

About thirty-six years have elapsed since the late Mr. John Sullivan, who was then Collector of the province of Coimbatore, was tempted to make an excursion into these wild regions, at the solicitation of the hill-people themselves; and ultimately to build the first of those neat English-looking residences which now stud the wide valley of Ootacamund in hundreds. The Collector, it is said, was making his usual tour in Collegal, a talook lying on the Mysore frontier, and there met a party of Badagas who had come to dispose of the produce of their fields. One of the party, seeing how Mr. Sullivan was suffering from the heat, invited him to visit the Blue Mountains, for there, said he, "it is so cold that water becomes transformed into glass!" The Collector was not slow to avail himself of the invitation, and the result, as we have before said, was the establishment of that delightful sanitarium which bears the name of Ootacamund.

It appears that prior to this two Civilians from Malabar had penetrated into these hills in pursuit of a gang of Moplah smugglers, but had retired when the object of their errand was accomplished. A Mr. McLeod seems also to have made an excursion into them, and many Badaga children, who were born on the day that he made his appearance there, were called after him, and retain the name of McLeod to this day !

To Mr. Sullivan, however, first occurred the idea of rendering the Neilgherries a place of resort for the European invalid. Where Stonehouse, (which was built by him) now stands, there was formerly a Toda mund, called by the Badagas "Hottegemund," and this gave its name to the whole valley. Other houses began rapidly to spring up, and the expectations of the residents that European products might be raised without difficulty, led to the establishment of a Government farm on an extensive scale in the Kaity valley. The project however was eventually abandoned, the return having proved far less than was anticipated. It seems doubtful whether, if carried on in European style, farming on these Hills will ever yield sufficient to make a man's fortune, though doubtless a moderate living might be gained by it. The bungalow at the Kaity farm was after-

wards occupied for some time by the Governor of Pondicherry.

At a subsequent period, Lord Elphinstone, then Governor of Madras, fancied the spot for the erection of a dwelling house, but met with great difficulty in effecting the purchase of the ground, on account of the objections raised by the Badagas, who had from time immemorial sacrificed a buffalo calf every year to a deity supposed to be present in an old decayed tree growing in that locality. It used to be the boast of the old headman that the Governor once came in person to ask for the site, and that he maintained his rights against him. It is said that what His Lordship could not accomplish was afterwards secured by his Lordship's steward, who fêted the Badaga chiefs and when he had got them into good humour, persuaded them to give up the land on condition of receiving an annual fee of 35 Rupees. The objections of those who had a prescriptive right to the soil being thus removed, his lordship obtained the land on a lease for 99 years. No sooner was the transfer concluded than his Lordship began to enlarge the old building, and in course of time converted the property into one well worthy of a nobleman's residence. The house was magnificently furnished, the exquisite taste of the late Count D'orsay

having been called into requisition for this purpose ; the grounds were tastefully laid out, and the whole assumed the appearance of a beautiful English Manor house—full of enchantment and attraction to the exiled European, a perfect oasis in the surrounding waste.

In 1845, or about that time, the property was purchased by the late Mr. Casamajor of the Civil Service for 15,000 Rupees, and about 10,000 Rupees more were expended by him in alterations. This excellent and respected gentleman soon established a school for the education of the Badaga children, but so little were the hill tribes able to appreciate the value of mental culture that it was necessary to offer them a *douceur* of one anna per diem for every child sent to the school, before any parent could be induced to allow his offspring to attend. The injurious tendency of this measure, was in some degree counteracted by making the lads work for a few hours in the day in the garden, the payment for attendance being looked upon as compensation for such labor : but the precedent was an exceedingly unfortunate one, and its effect has been to hinder the work of education among the people ; for they are impressed with the idea that they confer a favour by permitting their children to be taught, and the

generality of them therefore keep them back in the hope of inducing the missionaries to return to the old system of the master paying the pupil to come and be educated. At one time there were about a hundred boys in the school, all of whom were paid for attending.

Much sympathy was shewn by Mr. Casamajor, with the Missionaries of the Basel Évangélic Missionary Society, some of whom were frequently living under his roof and enjoying his hospitality. At his death, he left the greater part of his property to the Mission,—of which he had been a liberal supporter while living,—but the house itself was advertised for sale. A year passed without any suitable offer being made, and at the end of that period it was purchased by the Basel Society, for 10,000 Rupees, the position being central and well adapted for the head-quarters of the Mission, although the house was, in size, far beyond the requirements of the few missionaries located there. The Neilgherry branch of the Basel Mission is supported by the interest of the money realized from the sale of the property, that sum, having, in accordance with the late Mr. Casamajor's will, been invested in the funds for that purpose.

No sooner had Kaity become the property of the

Basel Missionary Society than orders were sent from Germany to dispose of such of the fittings and furniture as were unsuited to a Mission House. Carpets, curtains, marble chimney-pieces, and other decorations were therefore sold at public auction, and about 4,000 Rupees were thus realized. Such was the result which in the course of a very few years followed the enormous outlay expended upon the property by the late Governor of Madras. The house was a good deal altered during Mr. Casamajor's time, and now but little remains to remind the visitor of the gorgeous mansion of former days.

But who shall say that the property, which has thus, in the providence of God, passed into the hands of a Missionary Society, has lost any of its dignity by the transfer? It is true that it no longer forms the residence of viceroyalty, but it enjoys a higher distinction than this in being the abode of the children of the King of kings, and because from its walls there go forth to the perishing heathen around the honored delegates of the Prince of peace, preaching the gospel of reconciliation and glad tidings of good things. It is upon such excursions as these that the facts narrated in the following pages have been gleaned from the lips of the hill tribes themselves.

There are five different races, all of whom have from time out of mind, and perhaps for centuries past, inhabited the table land and slopes of these Hills. They are the Todas, Kurumbers, Kotas, Badagas, and Irulas. Those last named, however, cannot, very strictly speaking, be called a hill-tribe, partly because they reside so low down, and partly also because their language differs from that of the rest ; being a dialect of Tamil, while the rest speak each a dialect of Canarese. They are, however, likewise quite distinct from the people of the plains.

The most remarkable and interesting of the hill-tribes, from their peculiar personal appearance, isolated customs, and primitive form of religion, are the Todas, whose progenitors, as some of them say, were created on these hills. This, and the circumstance of their claiming to be lords of the soil, may have given ground for the conclusion arrived at by some that they are the aborigines of the Neilgherries.

The Todas have very justly attracted a large share of attention from European travellers and men of scientific pursuits ; but inability to hold converse with them, and an imperfect knowledge of their habits have led to the formation of widely antago-

nistic opinions as to their origin. Some ascribing, hypothetically, the Cairns and Kromlecks which stud the Hills in all directions to the Todas, as the work of their early ancestors, have put them down as descended from the old Scythians. Others, in view of their personal features, but especially their high aquiline nose, have supposed their forefathers to have been a colony of Roman settlers. There are those, again, who have thought them to be Jews, merely on the supposition that idol worship is not practised amongst them. But when calmly considered, it will be found that neither their language nor their religion justifies any of these conclusions.

It may be said that the supposition of the Cairns having been constructed by the Todas is borne out by the statements of some of their own tribe. A familiar acquaintance, however, with their language and the consequent facility of gaining an insight into their character have led me to discover that much dissimulation is practised by these men towards Europeans, and that they soon detect what information the latter desire to obtain and make their replies accordingly. The custom of paying the Todas for every insignificant item of information has naturally brought about this result ; and it is

now a matter of difficulty to obtain from them any account of their previous history, upon the truth of which implicit reliance can be placed. Some few of the Todas maintain that the cairns are the work of their ancestors, but these are men who have been examined by Europeans. The majority, and especially the most respectable of them, do not hold this opinion, and it would be a strange anomaly indeed in a people so proverbial for their respect for the dead, to allow, as the Todas do, these places of interment to be rudely disturbed and desecrated by the hands of strangers, did they believe them to be the receptacles of the ashes of their forefathers. Many of the circles constructed of loose stones which have been taken to be deserted temples of this tribe, were doubtless nothing more than buffalo-pens.

The other suppositions respecting the Todas, to which we have above alluded, need not be dwelt upon; for, mere peculiarity of features, unaccompanied by any collateral circumstances, cannot be considered conclusive as to the origin of any race of men; while the argument drawn from the supposed absence of idol worship among this tribe would equally prove every Mahomedan to be a Jew.

At what period the Todas first came to and set-

tled upon the Neilgherries, we have no means of ascertaining ; for they have no literature, nor any inscriptions, and such of their traditions as I have hitherto heard them mention afford no clue whatever by which this mystery can be unravelled. From their legends, and a particular word contained in their language, I am led to think that, prior to migrating to these Hills, they must, perhaps for centuries, have inhabited a range lying to the North East, in the direction of Hassanoor, beyond the Gazelhutty pass. Part of the tribe appears to have settled in a northerly direction, near Collegal ; for, I am frequently pressed to go and visit them and bring back intelligence respecting their condition in life ; prosperity with the Todas, as in patriarchal times, consisting in the number and extent of their herds.

The Todas are divided into five distinct classes, known by the names Peiky, Pekkan, Kuttan, Kenna, and Tody ; of which the first is regarded as the most aristocratic. These classes do not even intermarry with each other, and can therefore never lose their distinctive characteristics. This circumstance, taken in connection with the degenerating custom of polyandry which prevails amongst them,

may account for the small number of children found in Toda families. It is rarely that there are more than two or three children, and it is not at all an uncommon thing to find only a single child, while many families have none at all. This must eventually lead to the extinction of the tribe altogether, and probably the time is not far distant, when the Todas, whose numbers for years past have been gradually declining, will have passed away; and the mysterious interest which now so generally attaches to them be felt only by the octogenarian and the antiquary. One thing alone can ward off this result, and that is a hearty reception of the Gospel with all its purifying and elevating effects upon the life and habits of those who embrace it in its fulness, and carry its precepts into daily practice.

The custom of polyandry, or that of a woman marrying a plurality of husbands, which we have said prevails among this tribe, is somewhat peculiar. A Toda woman becomes the wife of all the brothers of the family to which she unites herself; and any children she may have are apportioned to her husbands according to seniority, the eldest of the brothers being considered the father of the first child, and so on. The necessary consequence of this

state of things is that there is little or no real sympathy between father and child.

Up to the period of Mr. Sullivan's excursions to these Hills, female infanticide was practised by the Todas, and only one female child was allowed to live in each family. The mode in which the child was killed was by strangulation. Their speedy abandonment of this inhuman rite was accomplished mainly by the personal influence exercised over them by that gentleman, who appears completely to have won their confidence, as well as that of the other Hill tribes. Songs are to this day frequently sung by them in praise of their first European Collector, and his conversations with them are thus immortalized. The chief objection urged by the Todas against the relinquishment of the cruel practice above mentioned, was that they should never be able to support more than one girl in a family; a difficulty which was proved to them to be more apparent than real.

Some Europeans have thought that the Todas are not idolaters, but my intercourse with them has led me to a different conclusion. It is true that

idolatry does not prevail among them in the gross forms in which it does among other native tribes, but on the other hand there is no doubt that they have *one* material object, to which they offer worship. That object is the sacred buffalo-bell, which they look upon as a representation of a deity called by them Hiridea, or "chief god." Before this bell libations of milk are poured, and prayers offered, by their priests. They make a distinction, however, between this deity and the God of the Christian Missionary, calling the latter Usuru Swamy, or the Lord of life. When any dispute arises respecting their wives or their buffaloes it has to be decided by the priest, who affects to become possessed by the Bell-god, and gives an oracular judgment in the matter. In this state he rushes frantically about, beating himself violently with a stick and vociferating loudly until the bystanders are fairly under the influence of terror, when he pronounces the deity's decision upon the point in dispute. The possessed priest then enters the temple while the assembled Todas prostrate themselves before it, leaving a narrow space for Hiridea to pass between them, when making his exit from the person of the

priest. It is needless to state that Hiridea's decision may be materially influenced by the contending parties, it being generally given in favor of the wealthiest of the litigants. In order to maintain their hold upon the minds of the Todas, whose confidence in their oracular god is apt to be shaken by the palpable partiality of his decisions, the priests are constrained occasionally to have recourse to intimidation, pretending for this purpose to be possessed by a much feared deity supposed to reside at Massanagoody, or the Sawyers' village, and demanding the sacrifice of a buffalo to appease his anger and avert his dreaded judgments.

A deity whom the Todas call the hunting god is supposed by them to reside at Nambili Kotay, in a tract of country belonging to the Nellamboor Rajah. To this deity they look for success in killing the tigers which attack and destroy their buffaloes.

The Makoorty peak is a spot held very sacred as the residence of a personage whom the Todas believe to be the keeper of the portals of heaven, or, according to their notions, a kind of Custom-house officer in the service of Usuru Swamy, of whom we have before made mention. Their idea is that the spirits of deceased Todas, together with the souls of

the buffaloes killed by their friends to accompany them to heaven and supply them with milk there, take a leap from this point as the nearest way to the celestial regions, which they call "the other district."

The Todas justify their belief in intermediate spiritual agencies by a reference to analogy. Any grievance they may have must be represented, say they, to the Tahsildar, who brings it to the notice of the Collector, by whom, if of sufficient importance, it is forwarded to some greater personage, to be ultimately laid before the Honorable East India Company, whom they suppose to be a lady living in great magnificence, and call "Mrs. Company." While admitting that we cannot approach God in our own righteousness, I tell them that Christ makes us children of God through faith in His blood, and endeavor to show that children do not go to the menials of their father's household, but to their father himself, for all that they need. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him : this blessed truth is therefore hidden from their eyes.

There were formerly seven Teriari or holy munds, each inhabited by a recluse called a Pàlaul or milkman, attended upon by a Kàvilaul or herdsman.

Three of these munds have been entirely deserted; and a fourth, near Ootacámund, is rarely frequented. At each of the remaining three there is a herd of holy buffaloes kept for the exclusive use of the two sanctified occupants of the mund, who are supposed to have renounced all intercourse with the world, and devoted themselves to a life of unceasing meditation upon God. The Pàlaul is thought the holier of the two ascetics, the Kavilaul being merely his servant. No female is allowed to go near the mund, nor can any man hold converse with the Pàlaul without special permission, and then only at a considerable distance. The only covering he wears, notwithstanding the inclemency of the climate, is a strip of coarse cloth round the loins. Great sanctity attaches to the person of the Pàlaul in the eyes of his Toda brethren, and he therefore exerts a powerful influence over their minds. They believe that God dwells in him, and makes known His will through him to those who come to him for counsel. The Pàlaul lives chiefly on milk, and rarely leaves the holy mund; but he occasionally visits the Badaga villages and obliges the people to give him whatever he fancies. As he approaches every one falls prostrate before him, and so great is his influence that they dare not refuse compliance with any of

his demands, fearing that by the use of witchcraft he may bring a murrain amongst their cattle. Prior to the period when Europeans began to resort to the Neilgherries, the authority of the Pálaul must have been very great, but of late years it has much diminished ; and as the light of civilization has penetrated into the dark corners of the Hills, superstition has quailed under its influence ; and even the self-righteous ascetic in his secluded retreat has gradually relaxed in those rigorous austerities which the religious notions of more primitive times had imposed upon him.

The Todas are considered by the other hill tribes to be the lords of the soil, and are accordingly paid a tribute in kind by them in acknowledgment of this right. At the present time, however, there is a great disposition on the part of the Badagas to disallow their claims, and were it not for the hold which the Todas have upon them by the pretended use of witchcraft, they would doubtless refuse payment of their accustomed tribute.

A belief in witchcraft is common to all the hill tribes ; and while the Todas fear the power they suppose the Kurumbas to possess in the exercise of this art, they and the Kurumbas both keep the Badagas in a state of perpetual terror by threatening

a similar resort to supernatural agency. When any epidemic prevails among the Badagas or a murrain decimates their cattle, their first endeavour is to discover the Todas, to whose enchantments the calamity may be attributed. About three years since, a murrain having carried off a large number of buffaloes in a certain village, the whole male population of two neighbouring Toda munds were taken before the chief Badaga of the district and accused of having killed the cattle by means of sorcery, the Badagas threatening at the same time to withhold their usual tribute of grain unless the murrain immediately ceased. The Todas readily consented to stop their enchantments, being unwilling to acknowledge that they possessed no such power as that ascribed to them, lest they should lose their ascendancy over the Badagas. Shortly after, the disease abated and the simple Badagas at once viewed this as the result of their compact with the Todas.

This however is not the kind of treatment that the Todas have always experienced at the hands of the superstitious Badagas. The latter sometimes become greatly exasperated, and there is reason to fear that before the authority of the British Government began to be duly felt by the hill tribes,

many a Toda forfeited his life to the blind vengeance of the Badagas. In one village, a tree is pointed out to this day to which a corpulent Toda is said to have been gibbeted ; and many years ago a man was executed for the murder of a Toda, whom he had killed on suspicion of sorcery. Three other Badagas, who were implicated in the murder, were banished for a period to another district, and subsequently released. Being deficient in geographical knowledge, they could not find their way back to the Neilgherries, and in their wanderings, they were decoyed by a Sanyasi or hermit and handed over to his Gooroo, with whom they lived for some years. One only now survives, and he pays a triennial visit to the Hills, but no longer looks upon them as his home. Only about two years ago, the Badagas of one of the districts, where there had been great mortality amongst the cattle, issued forth, en masse, provided with ropes and other apparatus, with the full determination of hanging the Toda whom they suspected of having occasioned the murrain ; and were only deterred from carrying their purpose into effect by a wholesome dread of the law. The present head of the Todas is descended from a man who was in this way cruelly murdered by the Badagas.

The primitive habits of the Todas and the open countenances of their women have led Europeans to believe that, in social life, they are as chaste as they are simple. A learned German author, taking his views from English works respecting this tribe, has gone so far as to say that missionary interference is much to be deprecated, as tending to induce the Todas to cast off their patriarchal habits, and to corrupt their innocence! My own intercourse with them has obliged me to form a very different opinion of their moral character. Partly owing to the looseness of the marriage tie, as before described, but chiefly from the want of a pure standard of religion and morals to guide them, immorality prevails amongst the Todas to a lamentable extent. Adultery is very common, and is only punished when the female happens to be the wife or daughter of an influential man. I was once allowed to be present at a tribunal composed of 50 Todas, formed for the trial of two culprits of this kind, the woman being the daughter of a headman. Her offence was viewed as a very trivial one, and the man was discharged with a fine of three buffaloes. The women are very bold and indelicate in their demeanour towards strangers, and very unfaithful to their husbands.

The ceremonies observed by the Todas on the occasion of their marriage are few and simple, the feasting which is customary at such times being the object to which their attention is chiefly devoted. On the day of her nuptials, the bride is brought to the house of her future husbands, who place first their right and then their left foot upon her head, while she leans down for the purpose. She is next told to bring water for cooking, and a compliance with this injunction constitutes her the mistress of the house. The dower given by Todas for their wives varies from twenty to thirty Rupees. In former years it was much less, but the demand for wives has become greater, and their value, like that of every other staple commodity on the Hills, has much increased. As the celebration of marriage is not attended with any degree of solemnity and no mutual vows are entered into, the bond is easily broken. Dissatisfaction with the wife justifies the husbands in sending her back to her parents, and the wife may desert her husbands with impunity. Instances have frequently occurred in which a girl has fled from two or three homes until she has at length found one in which she has been contented to remain.

The festivity which elsewhere marks the nuptial day is by the Hill tribes observed rather on the day of interment. On such occasions, there is much music and dancing and expenditure of money; and a strange mixture of weeping and hilarity.

The Todas have two funeral ceremonies, one of which is performed immediately after death, and the other, about a twelve month later. Soon after the spirit has left its earthly tenement, they remove the corpse of the deceased to one of their groves, lay it on the funeral pyre, and burn it. They then slaughter a few buffaloes to accompany the deceased to the world of spirits, and furnish him with milk there; and afterwards collect and preserve his ashes. This rite they call the "green funeral." The ceremony observed a year later is considered much more important, and is attended with a great deal of display. The Badagas, Kotas, and Kurumbas, are all invited to be present, and are regaled with refreshments during the performance of the rite, which for the sake of distinction they term the "dry funeral." It was not uncommon in former times for forty or even fifty buffaloes to be hunted down and cruelly beaten to death with clubs, after being driven into the enclosures constructed by the Todas for the purpose; but of late, some check has

happily been placed upon this wanton and cruel practice. Serious accidents used often to befall the Todas who in the heat of excitement chased the poor animals round and round the narrow enclosures until they became infuriated and gored their persecutors. The Todas pay a tax to the Government for each buffalo that they possess, and on the ground of a useless destruction of their cattle being detrimental to the pecuniary interests of the State, they were recently prohibited from killing more than at the rate of two buffaloes for a rich, and one for a poor, Toda. Unwilling to abandon a custom which had been transmitted to them from their forefathers, they have adopted the plan of waiting till the death of two or three of their tribe enabled them to sacrifice a large number of buffaloes at once. When this prohibitory order came out, the Todas charged me with having been the cause of its being issued, and vented their maledictions upon me for my supposed interference. They threatened to flee from the hills, but I declared myself prepared to follow them wherever they might go; and in course of time they have become reconciled to the restrictions placed upon the mode of observing their ancestral customs.

There is no doubt that a secret satisfaction

is felt by the most sensible of the Todas at the saving thus occasioned, although they are afraid to acknowledge it openly before their own people. The sum expended at one of these "dry funerals" frequently amounted to 400 or 500 Rupees. I have been surprized to see produced on these occasions some gold and silver coins which are no longer current,—amongst them an old Venetian gold coin of the value of about 6 Rupees. These coins are generally exhibited by being suspended outside a temporary building which they term the funeral hut. I have endeavoured to induce the Todas to sell me some of them, but, having received them as heirlooms from their forefathers, they will not part with them. The musical part of the entertainment at the dry funeral is performed by the Kotas and Kurumbas, who, as a return for their services, are permitted to remove the buffaloes killed during the ceremony. These they dissect on the spot, and carry home the hides and portions of the flesh to their villages.

Although an air of festivity predominates at the second or commemorative funeral of the Todas, there is by no means an absence of apparent mourning. Lamentations and cries of despair are heard, and there is every appearance of deep and poignant grief; so much so that when I witnessed the rite

for the first time, I was much affected and was almost moved to tears. When I found, however, that the lamentations were merely uttered in pursuance of established custom, and that often in the midst of the performance the Todas would hold out their hands to me for a present, I ceased to feel any emotion at their signs of grief. The mode in which they exhibit these feelings is by putting their foreheads together, two at a time. The expressions of sorrow to which they give utterance are generally in the form of questions to the spirit of the deceased, such as : Are you suffering from fever ? Are your buffaloes thriving ? Why did you leave us so soon !

Besides the one just described I am not aware of any other season of assembling being observed among the Todas. They never meet for worship at the temple of their Bell-god, as the other hill tribes are in the habit of doing at their little pagodas, and do not seem to care for anything beyond their buffaloes. All their religious duties they leave to be performed by the Pálaul in his lonely retreat ; and by the Pálikarpál or dairyman of each mund. Whether these pseudo-*holy* men trouble themselves much about the matter is very doubtful. The only sign of adoration that I have ever seen them perform is

lifting the right hand to the forehead, covering the nose with the thumb, when entering the sacred dairy : and the words, " may all be well," are all that I have ever heard them utter in the form of a prayer.

The language of the Todas is a dialect of Canarese, and may be learnt without much difficulty by any person well acquainted with that tongue. What has led Europeans to suppose that they speak a language peculiar to themselves, is their deep pectoral pronunciation, a pronunciation apparently resulting from ceaseless association with their buffaloes, by which they are surrounded day and night. In their songs, the most unmelodious sounds occur,—better fitted to scare away a wild beast, than to lull a person to slumber, for which purpose they are generally sung. Unlike those of the other hill tribes, they are usually devoid of any signification, or if they have any meaning at all they refer merely to events of recent occurrence. I have collected about five or six thousand Toda words, and find that nearly three-fourths of them also exist in the dialects of the other races, but so much altered in pronunciation as to appear to belong to quite a different tongue. That their language is very uncultivated is manifest from the fact that, in most of their verbs,

they have only the present tense, the past and future tenses being expressed by the aid of adverbs.

The Todas have not, as far as I am aware, any poetry or legendary tales which might serve to throw light on their former history. In one of the historical ballads sung by the Badagas, mention is made of the doings of a Toda chieftain, of whom they have themselves preserved merely the name, and that of two sacred spots where, according to their belief, his jewels were found, after the chieftain's assumption into the regions of bliss. In those regions he is supposed to be feeding his buffaloes, for without this occupation a Toda has no conception of happiness ; and his buffaloes as well as those of other deceased Toda celebrities are represented, they fancy, by the nebule of the milky way.

The reader will be able to form some conception of the depth of ignorance in which the Hill tribes are sunk, when he learns that the theme of this legend, which is much in the style of our nursery tales, is with them a subject of religious belief. The story is related in a Badaga poem, composed chiefly of dactyles and trochees, and runs thus :—

“ Koturu-Peiky, taking a small earthen vessel in his hand, went one day with his brother Netaraddy

to Koonda Kotagherry, and thence down the slopes of the Hills to the Bowàny river. There he quarrelled with his brother, and in his anger pronounced upon him the following curse :—“ If Neta-raddy has the same parents as myself, let him no more use his staff, nor move his foot, nor eat the food which he carries in his bag.” Having delivered himself of this malediction, Koturu Peiky went down to the river-side to quench his thirst, and on looking round suddenly beheld seven fairies, in form like pigeons, bathing in the stream. Six of them had silver robes and the seventh a mantle of gold. Koturu Peiky spread out the golden mantle and seated himself upon it, upon which six of the fairies disappeared ; but the seventh drew near and addressed him thus :—‘ O turbanless brother, restore me my mantle, and I will be your sister.’ Peiky answered ‘ I will not have such a one as yourself, only for a sister.’ ‘ Then I will be your daughter’ said the fairy. ‘ Such a daughter would be of little service to me’ replied Peiky. The fairy then offered to stand to him in the relation of a mother, but nothing would satisfy Koturu Peiky but that she should become his wife ; and on her consenting to this, he delivered up her mantle. The fairy then enquired what the Todas lived upon in their

mountain homes, and was told that they had an abundance of grain for the mere asking, and drank the milk of buffaloes, of which they possessed large herds. The fairy Dêvaganné, for this was her name, then extracted a hair from her head, and gave it to Peiky saying : ‘ when you wish to leave this world, put this hair on your head and look upwards, and you shall be immediately taken up to the other world.’ After uttering these words, she disappeared, and was never seen again. Koturu Peiky took care of the hair and returned to his wife Alépanné, at Muttinâud mund, near the road to Kalhatty. His wife, however, was exceedingly indignant when she heard that her second husband Netaraddy was lying prostrate under Peiky’s curse, and told Peiky to go away and bring his brother back with him. Peiky felt much remorse at what he had done, and placing his silvery finger on his golden forehead, intreated the Deity to remove the effects of his curse. The relief was instantaneous, and Netaraddy rose from the ground none the worse for his brother’s imprecation.

“ After a while, Koturu Peiky began to feel a desire to quit this world ; so he called for his brother and made him promise with an oath that he would bring up his children carefully ; and further that

he would perform the "green funeral" for Peiky at the place where his ring fell, and the "dry funeral" wherever his cloth might be found. Having arranged these preliminaries, Koturu Peiky drew out the Fairy's hair, placed it upon his head, looked upwards, and was taken up into the realms of bliss. His ring fell near Agennàdu, and his cloth was found at Kariakallu, places in the vicinity of Tannery in the Todanaud. Netaraddy lost no time in performing the first funeral rite, in the presence of a large number of people. After a while, he dreamt that his brother had not been received into caste in the other world, but was still restricted to the ditch or gulf of the dead. He therefore performed the second or "dry funeral" and made a vow that he would walk from Muttinàud Mund to Kodanàdu, near the 'seven mile tope' without crossing any stream; that is, that he would confine his track to the mountain tops. He set off on his pilgrimage, but after three days was no more seen: he also had been taken up into the other world."

Such is the story of Koturu Peiky, or Koturu Tódy, as he is also called; for both these classes of the Todas endeavour to make out that he belonged to their own caste. There are to this day in the possession of an old Toda of the Tody tribe, what

are said to be the ring and other relics of the saint, and the two places before named are objects of worship among the Todas generally. About a century ago a fierce dispute arose in one of these places between the Todas and Badagas, which ended in the murder of a Toda chief, whose father had been previously hanged for sorcery by the Badagas. A Badaga headman likewise lost his life in the affray. The Peikies are supported by the Badagas in their assertion that Koturu was one of their caste, but as Muttinaud Mund is the holy place of the Tody caste, and the relics of the saint are in the possession of a Tody, and as further the two other places named in the story do not belong to the Peikies, it is probable that Koturu was a Tody, and only called Koturu Peiky in the story from jealousy. Koturu (derived perhaps from Kota and uru, one of the seven Kotagherries of the hills) occurs as the name of a place, as well as Indragiri and Niligiri Durga, in the "Kongu Désa Rajakal."

Besides the Pàlauls and Kavilauls of the sacred munds, whose life and habits we have before described, a man is set apart for the priestly office in every village, and has to go through a regular course of preparation to fit him for his duties. These duties have little to do with religious worship,

but simply consist in milking the buffaloes and performing all work in connection with the dairy, which, among the Todas, is the holiest occupation that a man can engage in. The person who is consecrated to this office must belong either to the Peiky caste, who call themselves "Der Moch," i. e. children of God, or from the Pekkan caste, who, I have reason to believe, are very closely connected with the Peikies.

When a man undertakes the office of village priest, for which he is usually remunerated by the gift of a buffalo or two, he separates himself entirely from his family and relations, and is not even allowed to be touched by them during the period of his priesthood. The preparations for this supposedly sacred office occupy a whole month, and the exposure to which the aspirant to it is subjected is so great as to place his life in some peril. For two days and two nights he must remain in the jungles without a particle of clothing to protect him from the severity of the climate. His body is at this time to be rubbed over with the juice of a certain tree called Foor or Toor, the botanical name of which I do not know. On the third day this purifying juice is washed off, and he is allowed to enter a small hut, which is the only shelter he is permitted to have

during the remainder of the period. When the thirty days of his purification are concluded he is called by the name of "Várshály," which, if my derivation be correct, means "a courageous man." He then enters upon his duties. From the first day of his preparation an attendant is given to him, who may be of any of the five Toda castes and who is called Tárvány. This man, though also set apart for the work, is not considered so holy as the Várshály, and must reside in a separate hut.

In opposition to the scriptural precept, "thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn," the Várshály is not allowed to taste milk during the period of his office as village dairy man. He may, however, help himself to as much ghee as he may require. The Várshály's engagement is not for life, but for a limited term, and at the termination of that period he may resign his office; giving one month's notice, however, of his intention to do so, to allow of another person being prepared to take his duties.

I cannot help pitying these poor men, though their act is a voluntary one; and I avail myself of every opportunity to speak to the headmen of their cruelty in exposing the life of a fellow-man to such use-

less risk. Some time ago I came upon one of these Vārshálies, lying in a damp place in the heart of a dense forest. The young man had scarcely a rag to cover him, and protect him from the extreme cold, and was suffering so much from fever that I thought he could not live through the night. I wanted to feel his pulse and give him medicine, but was not allowed to do so, being considered too unholy; and even my Toda Moonshee was not permitted to touch him. Being much moved at the condition of the unfortunate youth, the victim of a false religion, I could not bear to leave him perishing in the cold, and therefore desired my Toda servant to sell me his cloth to throw over him. Then proceeding to the villagers whom he had engaged to serve, I addressed to them a few words of rebuke, and told them that it was impossible that "Usuru Swámy" (the Lord of Life) could have given such an injunction in regard to their priests, but that it was rather a suggestion of the Devil, who was a murderer from the beginning. I was glad to hear some time afterwards that my denunciations against their cruelty had so far produced effect as to induce them to remove the young priest into one of their houses in consideration of his successor having been already undergoing preparation for a period of twenty-six days.

The course of preparation before described is only gone through in the case of persons set apart for the priestly office in the villages of the Kuttan Kenna, and Tody castes. The Peikies and Pekkans who, as I have said, furnish priests for the other classes, content themselves with a common Tárvaly for the work of their own dairies. The Kenna caste, whose idol mund is situated at Kandel near Ootacamund, appear in former years to have possessed large herds of buffaloes; and for this reason they employed and still employ, in addition to the Várshály and Tárvaly, a third functionary whom they call "Kurpály," after their bell-god Kurpully. The duties and position of this individual are in all respects the same as those of the Várshály.

It may be here mentioned that the preparation for the office of Pálaul is of the same nature as that we have just described, except that the candidate has to remain eight days and nights in the jungle, instead of two. The Pálauls are also taken from the Peiky caste, and their attendants the Kávilauls either from the Peikies, or from the Pekkans. A visit to the abode of one of these ascetics enabled me to see what a life of useless self-abnegation they are constrained by their customs to lead.

My object was to deliver to him the gracious message of Salvation by faith in Jesus Christ, and to induce him to return to his family and friends. I was forbidden to approach by the regular path, because it passed too close to his house, and was therefore obliged to make my way down a precipitous and dangerous hill-side overhanging a deep valley, which it made me giddy to look down upon. To add to the peril of the undertaking, the sacred buffaloes, which had probably never before seen a European and were very fierce, charged me several times, and were only kept from injuring me by the presence of my Toda servant.

On at length arriving at the holy mund, I at once recognized a countenance that was familiar to me, and found that the Pálaul was a young man of about five and twenty years of age, who had undertaken the sacred office some eighteen months previously, and whom I had known as an ordinary Toda. I remembered well the occasion when a Toda affected to be possessed, and amidst his wild and frantic gestures uttered the most fearful execrations against his brethren, if they did not immediately instal a successor to the deceased Pálaul of this mund. The Kapilaul here is an old man and rather deaf ; and as he cannot approach his ex-

alted brother, the latter has to shout at the pitch of his voice, when he wishes to hold converse with him. My Toda servant was obliged to deposit his little store of tobacco at a distance, lest he should defile the holy place. His salutation, however, was not such as might have been expected under the circumstances, for instead of making use of an expression of adoration to the priest, he simply uttered three words signifying "are the buffaloes and calves well?"

The young Pálaul was rejoiced to see me, and we held the best intercourse that was possible. It was preaching, however, under unusual difficulties; for even the breath of a human being is supposed to be a defilement, and the Pálaul's own father must bow down in his presence, and not come within ten yards of him; and I of course could not claim any greater privilege than was possessed by his own parent. I endeavoured to persuade the youthful Pálaul of the utter futility of his endeavours to secure the favour of a spotless God towards himself and his kinsmen by a mere act of self-denial, while his sins remained unpardoned and the wrath of God rested upon him: and then pointed him to that Saviour, whom to know is Eternal Life. I encouraged him not to be afraid of the headman,

his uncle ; and promised to befriend him if he should feel disposed to forsake his present life. I knew that instances had occurred in which these recluses had become tired of their ascetic habits, and returned to their families ; and that all they had to contend with was the anger of their headman ; while on the other hand, it was always a matter of extreme difficulty to induce men to leave their homes, and devote themselves to a life of celibacy and privation. I felt sure also from the tenor of our conversation, which lasted two hours, that the poor youth had not entered upon his retirement willingly, but merely in fulfilment of a vow made under pressure which he had not the moral courage or independence to resist.

The Badagas of the surrounding villages always supply the Pálaul with grain, and they are expected to dispose of the ghee made from the milk of the sacred buffaloes. All this they do willingly, because they stand in fear of the supposed power of the Pálaul to kill their cattle by sorcery.

I have lately resided among the Todas, and have endeavoured to obtain some information from them respecting their idols. Their reluctance to tell me even the names by which they called them, had

only tended to increase my curiosity. The answer they always gave me was, that they did not know ; to which I used to reply that I should be very unhappy if I did not know the God to whom my prayers were addressed. From my Toda Moonshee, however, I learnt that, besides Hiriadéva, to which allusion has already been made, they acknowledge a deity whom they call Aevónu, and who they say placed the sacred bells in their swamy houses. In one of the Peiky temples there are five, in another three bells ; but in those of the other casts only one. The Pekkans, however, have none at all. In addition to Aevónu, a particular swamy is supposed to preside over each idol-mund. The one at Kandel is called Kurpully. The three in the largest Toda village, viz : Taror, are designated Teerbushva, Dechva, and Peshtiva. My opinion is that these are nothing more than the names of the several Toda chiefs who first accompanied the tribe to these hills, and that Aevónu was the name of their common leader. It is not unreasonable to suppose that, on the demise of their early chieftains some eight centuries ago, each section may have taken the bell of their leader or representative's herd of buffaloes, and set it up as a charm to protect them and their herds from

the wild beasts with which the hills must then have swarmed ; and that, in the course of years, tradition may have so mystified their true nature and history as to have led to their deification. All the Todas except the Pekkan class who reside chiefly at Manchakall above the horticultural garden, give an entertainment to their friends in front of their temples once a year at the beginning of the dry season.

In preaching to the Todas I had made use of the information I had gained respecting the names of their deities, and had always been asked by them how I had come by my knowledge, but had invariably refused to betray my informant. Not long ago, hearing that an influential Toda was about to have a gathering at his village on the occasion of bestowing his marriage dowry, I hastened to the spot in the hope of finding a good number of listeners, but had no sooner arrived than I was cited to appear before the headman to explain by what means I had learnt the names of the Toda swamies. I told him that as he had no authority to judge me I should not answer his question, to which he replied that I had been drinking the milk of their buffaloes on which account many of them would die, and that he was determined to fine my informant and expel him from his caste. To this I

rejoined that my friends would subscribe and pay the fine, and that I would receive him as a brother, for I also had no caste at all. I then turned the tables upon my noisy accuser and threatened to reveal the crimes which I knew him to have committed, unless he desisted from assailing me. The headman was immediately speechless and afterwards sent to beg my pardon for what he had done.

It is always a matter of difficulty to assemble many Todas for the purpose of addressing them respecting the things belonging to their peace. I am satisfied if at any time I can get five together, and am often obliged to be content with two, to whom I declare the unsearchable riches of Christ. The announcement that I am the messenger or peon of the Usuru swámy (Lord of life), and that after death both they and I must appear in the Cutcherry of the great Judge, excited a no small amount of interest among the Todas when I was lately living amongst them, and on my further telling them that the Lord Jesus Christ had made an atonement for our sins and opened a way of access to God, they would ask me over and over again what words they ought to use in prayer to God ; but, alas ! here their interest in the matter always ceased.

The Todas divide the Neflgherries into four dis-

tricts : viz., Malor (Mountainous district) extending from the Orange valley to the Makurty peak ; Pirgoor, which may mean the district of Feringies or Europeans, for they have a tradition that ages ago a small colony of Roman Catholics resided near the Avalanche ; Karor (district of calves) reaching from Kaity to the Koonde river ; and Meuror (rainy district) lying beyond the Koonde river to the east of the Avalanche, and included within the limits of the Malabar Collectorate. For the tract between the Avalanche and Sispara, they have no general name.

According to a tradition which the Todas have preserved, they once had a King and Queen reigning over them, but all that they now know about them is that they were subdued and deprived of their authority by one of the Rajahs of the house of Oomatoor, who was driven to the Hills by his rival, an ancestor of the present Rajah of Mysore, and took possession of the tract lying between the Orange Valley and Ootacamund, called by the Badagas "Todanaud." The usurper built a fort named Malékoté, near Kalhatty, the ruins of which still exist and prove that it must have been a comparatively strong place. I do not think the present Toda population, including those who have settled in the Nellamboor country, can exceed a thousand souls.

Thus concludes what I have endeavoured to render a popular and generally interesting narrative of the customs of this remarkable race. I have not extended my notes to a description of the physical peculiarities of the Todas or to a minute account of their religious ceremonies and habits because this has already been done by abler pens. If it be now asked "who are the Todas? and whence did they originally come to these Hills?" I am obliged to answer "I cannot tell." I am satisfied that they are not the aborigines of the Neilgherries, though it is probable that, for eight centuries, they have resided upon them. How long, previous to settling here, they lived on the Hassanoor range it is impossible to say. The Brahmins of the plains maintain that the Todas were followers in the train of Ráma, when he came from the north to avenge himself on Rávana, and that desiring independence they deserted, and fled to the Hills: but of this tradition they themselves know nothing. Another account given of them by certain Sanyásis, or religious devotees, is that they are descendants of a race inhabiting a range of Hills to the North East of the Neilgherries. Whether there is any resemblance between the Todas and the Khonds, I am not aware. The Todas however, do not credit this account and believe that

the object of the Sanyásis is merely to ingratiate themselves into their favour, with a view to pecuniary advantage.

I have carefully studied their proper names of men and places, and have failed to find any clue as to their origin and early history. It was only a few days since that I had an opportunity of conversing with one of the most intelligent of the Todas, but he was unable to give me any information upon the subject. An impression prevails that caste is not observed amongst them, but this is not the case, although the distinctions they make are not so marked as those made by the Hindoos generally.

The most numerous of the Hill tribes are the BADAGAS. They probably number about 15,000 souls, occupying 300 villages and hamlets. Their name signifies "people of the North," from the greater part of them having come to the Hills from the Mysore country. They are called by the Todas "Mav" (father-in-law), a kind of honorary title, not intended to imply any relationship. The ancestors of some of the Badagas were inhabitants of Nunjana-

goody, in the territory of the Rajah of Oomatoor, and either accompanied or followed him in his flight to the Hills. Those of the Paranganaud Badagas came up from Talémalé, a range of low hills lying to the North-East of the Neilgherries. The people of those parts still look upon them as their relatives, and eat with them. A connection still exists between the Lingaites of the hills and those of Seegoor and Goondelpetta, from which places the priests pay the Badagas a pastoral visit every second or third year, generally receiving a cow or an ox for their trouble. There are also some degraded Vellálar castes, with some of whom I understand the descendants of the old Koonde Rajahs do not object to eat. A class of people called Bétars, or sportsmen, who live near the ruins of the old fort of Malékoté, closely resemble the Badagas in their appearance and habits, but are not acknowledged by them to be their equals. Their ancestors were the peons and servants of the Oomatoor Rajah, and were employed by him as tax-gatherers, for which reason they are still cordially disliked by the Badagas.

To the eye of the European there is nothing to distinguish one Badaga from another, but among themselves they recognize eighteen different classes, each of which has its own peculiar characteristics.

The highest caste among the Badagas are the *Wodearu*. They are exceedingly proud, and will scarcely deign to notice an European when they meet one. They will not sit at meals with the common Badagas, and regard themselves as their Goo-roos or priests. When a Badaga gives a feast, which he generally does when he shaves the head of one of his children for the first time, he invites a Wodea to bless the food. At a funeral the Badagas in general take off their turbans, but the Wodearu keep theirs on. Every native, not even excepting the petty hill-chiefs, must bow down before them and pay them adoration. It is a painful sight for a European, to see a man kneel down and offer to his fellow the worship due to God alone; and what renders the scene more sickening is that the men to whom this homage is paid, far from being superior to others in any moral quality, have all the worst feelings of our nature altogether unsubdued: though living by alms they are proud and avaricious, and look with contempt even on those to whose generosity they are indebted for support. We must not forget, however, that it is the free distinguishing grace of God alone that enables us to look with horror and pity on scenes such as this. We have been blessed with "the spirit of wisdom and reve-

lation in the knowledge of Jesus," and we know not that we should have viewed these things differently from the poor Badagas, had we never had access to the precious Word of God in which it has been recorded for our example how Peter and Paul and Barnabas acted under similar circumstances. As the Wodearu will not condescend to carry burdens, or take employment with Europeans, they are very poor, whilst the rest of the Badagas are comparatively prosperous. The Wodearu are not many in number, and occupy only five villages.

The *Kongaru* are another class, so called from their ancestors, who came from Sargoor, having missed their way and ascended the hills by the Guzelhutti pass, which is on the Coimbatore side. The Coimbatore country is called by the hill tribes Kongu. This class wear the lingam, as well as the Wodearu but have less caste-pride. Their villages lie near the Rungaswamy peak, and they are remarkable only for their extreme loquacity. All the inhabitants of one of their villages have lost their caste, and the privilege of wearing the lingam, because some generations ago the son of their headman fell in love with a common Badaga girl, and in order to please her, tasted a little meat, which no lingaite is permitted to do. When the circumstance was

brought to the notice of the priest, he commanded the offender to drown himself. The Badagas, however, dissuaded him from this act, and extended their protection to himself and his relatives. Though they have lost their lingam, the Kongaru have retained much of their ancient pride, and also believe themselves to be something out of the common, because one of the Badaga Rajahs formerly married a girl of their village.

The *Adikáries* are divided into two sects, viz : the Lingadikáries, or those who wear the lingam, and the meat Adikáries, or those who have been deprived of that badge. The division was occasioned by the act of a headman who, to appease the cravings of hunger, ventured to eat a little meat. His descendants are not allowed to wear the lingam, and can only intermarry with common Badagas. A third sect of the Adikáries have, by the commission of some forbidden act, the nature of which I have not been able to discover, fallen still lower in the social scale, and are only permitted to contract marriages with the lowest class of Badagas. The Adikáries came originally from the village of Nellitoray. There is something about these people which has led me to take great interest in them, and I was for a long time in expectation that they would be

the first converts to Christianity from among the hill tribes.

The *Kanakaru*, or Accountants, are the descendants of a man who, with his family, came to the hills from the Tamil country. They were employed by the Rajahs as village accountants. They are the only class who have preserved the art of reading and writing, the fathers communicating to their sons the little knowledge they themselves inherited from their parents. On account of their superior attainments, the *Kanakaru* are the exorcists and physicians of the *Badagas*. Sickness among the hill tribes is ascribed to the direct agency and presence of Satan. When a man, therefore, is attacked with a serious illness one of the *Kanakaru* is called in, and requested to write a mantrum or incantation, and exorcise the evil spirit; for which he receives a remuneration of half of a rupee. It is said that the *Kanakaru* formerly aspired to the same honours and privileges as those enjoyed by the *Wodearu*, and the *Badagas* in derision composed a proverb in reference to their presumption, which is in use amongst them to this day. The saying runs thus: "O Kanaka! you are not in debt but still carry a stone (meaning the lingam) on your neck: it is just as if you had shed

tears though nobody had died." Reference is here made to a former practice, now abolished, of placing a heavy weight on the neck of a debtor to induce him to pay his debts.

The *Chittre* class came to the hills, together with the Wodearu, in the train of the Rajah of Malé-koté, and were left destitute when Tippoo's troops compelled the Rajah to flee from that stronghold. The descendant of the Rajah always sojourns in the village inhabited by the Chittre class, when he pays a visit to the scene of his ancestor's glory in past ages. Many years ago, a quarrel arose between a Chittre and the Kotas of Tirichigiddi Kotagherry about some land, and during the altercation one of the Kotas touched the Chittre's lingam. The latter felt so polluted by the circumstance that he killed himself on the spot with a hatchet. This terrible punishment, one would fancy, should have amply atoned for the man's offence, especially as it was one in which he was rather a victim than an intentional violator of the rules of his caste. It was not so viewed, however, by his brethren, for they have excommunicated his descendants and obliged them to seek for wives among the common Badagas; notwithstanding that they have done nothing personally to lose caste, and still abstain from eating meat.

A few years ago, a hungry Chittre ventured to share a common Badaga's meal with him, and on being discovered was recommended by his spiritual adviser to drown himself, with his lingam. Hearing of the poor man's troubles, I hastened to the village and comforted him and dissuaded him from following the priest's advice; a year afterwards, he was carried off by fever.

The *Belli*, (silver) class, maintain that they formerly belonged to the Wodearu, but lost their caste by some misfortune: if so, this probably happened before they came to the Hills. The *Bellis* are the most cunning of all the Badagas. All the inhabitants of the village of Jackattalla are of this caste, and a proverb in common use respecting them runs thus: "Unless you are very wide-awake, do not go to Jackattalla." My own experience confirms the truth of this saying; and I look upon those to whom it refers as among the most disreputable of all the hill-tribes.

The *Haruvaru* are a degenerate class of Brahmins, and are as devoid of cleanliness as the rest of the hill tribes. The brahminical string and the hereditary pride of this sect, are all that they now possess to show that they belong to the "twice born." They do not generally object to carry bur-

dens for Europeans ; but if they suspect them to contain meat, they immediately exhibit their string, and beg to be excused. They have five or six hamlets of their own, but many of them are scattered among the other Badaga villages, where they officiate as priests during the festival observed at harvest time. Every second year, on these occasions, the *Haruvaru* and some other classes of Lingaites were in the habit of performing what the simple Badagas regarded as a miracle, that is, they used to walk on burning coals with bare feet, pretending that the god they worshipped could allay the heat and make fire like cold water to them. As they only remained a few seconds, however, on the coals it was impossible that they could receive much injury. I was greatly amused one day at having an application made to me by one of these people for some ointment for his feet, as in the excitement of the moment he had exceeded the usual time, and consequently burnt the soles of his feet very severely. How hundreds of adult Badagas could assemble to witness so palpable an imposture was always to me a matter of astonishment. I used often however to be taunted by them, and challenged to perform a similar miracle in the name of my God : to which I replied that a much greater wonder than that, was,

that I should not cease to love such squalid fellows as they were; and that too, in spite of all the abuse they daily heaped upon me.

When a recent order was issued, prohibiting the practice above described, I had to submit to the most dreadful execrations, showered upon me as the originator of the order: and a village having been burnt down about the same time, the catastrophe was represented as a manifestation of the wrath of their deity. I took occasion to contrast the attributes of the God I feared with the revengeful spirit of their idol, and further expressed my surprise that they, and not I, should have been the victim of their Swamy's anger.

The first settlers of this caste appear to have brought no wives with them and they are consequently obliged to intermarry with common Badagas, unless, which is very seldom the case, they succeed in obtaining the hand of a Kanaka girl. The *Haruvaru* are an insignificant class, and the harvest is the only time in which they are brought into any notice. The Badagas generally despise them on account of their overweening pride, and for the purpose of humbling them throw a proverb in their teeth, the purport

of which is that "the girls of the Brahmins can get no one to marry them."

The seven classes before named are considered by the Badagas to be the highest castes amongst them; the rest hold an inferior rank in the social scale. The most numerous of these is the "*Marriage*" caste, descended from seven brothers, who came up to the Hills from Talémalé. Each of these brothers is said to have built a house for himself and his family in a different part of the hills, and new villages were constructed by their descendants; so that the Badagas of this class are now scattered over all the tract lying between the "seven mile tope" and Shigamalé, beyond the Koondé district. The place, however, where the ancestor of each family first settled is considered the principal village, and forms a kind of nucleus of the rest, where the family idol is set up, consisting in some places of nothing more than the metal plate or drinking vessel used by their ancestor. On account of these Badagas having been formerly subject to the Rajah of Hattara Koté, who also had a palace at Talémalé, they are sometimes called the *Hattara* caste. One branch of these is nearly extinct, though formerly very numerous, and rich in buffaloes.

The *Anearu*, another section of the Badagas, live exclusively in the Todanaud. Of them, as witnessed by the apostle respecting the Cretians of old, the proverb says : " do not believe any thing that these people say, for they always lie."

The *Mari* class came from the vicinity of Nanjanagoody, and likewise settled in the Todanaud. The headmen of the two last mentioned castes are the richest, and consequently the most influential of all the Badagas. It appears that many years ago half of the *Mari* class quitted the locality in which their ancestors had first settled, and moved to another direction, taking with them by force the village idol, which the other inhabitants refused to let them have. Shortly afterwards, the idol was stolen again, so the separatists were left in the uncomfortable predicament of having no deity to protect them. However, the installation of a new object of Hindu worship is not a matter of difficulty, where one is in the secret. In the present instance, a woman was bribed to say that she had seen a stone in a certain field, out of which she had observed blood to flow ; all were glad to hear the announcement, and the wonderful stone was without further ado constituted the village Swamy. The head of this village appears to be rather favorable

to Christianity, frequently kneeling down in prayer with me ; and some time ago, when two buffalo-calves were sent for the purpose of being sacrificed to the new idol, he returned them to the owner, and this without my advice or knowledge.

The Kaity people belong to the *Kastury* caste. They are also called Gangalaru, which leads me to believe that their ancestors were Vellalars, and came to the Hills from the vicinity of Periapattana. A proverb directed against runs thus :—“ If you are poor, do not go to Kaity ; the people there will not give you any thing.” Another proverb describes them as being very boastful, and never willing to admit that they are in the wrong, though you may have even seen them brought to the ground by a Kota. There are seven idols in the village of Kaity. Where there is a multiplicity of gods, the people are sure to be great rogues ; and such is the case here. The Koondé Badagas also belong to the *Kastury* class : of them a proverb says, to mark their avarice, that they will ask the interest of a debt even after a hundred years.

There are two classes of Vellalars, scattered in different districts ; one of which hold a sufficiently high place in the social scale for the former Koondé Rajah to eat with them.

The *Dumañ* caste are so called after their ancestor of that name. They have villages in three separate districts, far apart from each other, but the same characteristics are to be found in all of them ; and this circumstance they have particularly manifested in their uniform indifference to the preaching of the Gospel.

The *Gonaja* class live on the confines of Mékunad, near the Koondé river.

The *Manika* (gem) caste are located near Kotagherry. Why this fine name has been given to them I do not understand. The headman of the caste was hanged in Mr. Sullivan's time for the murder of some unfortunate Kurumbas.

The *Toreas* are the lowest class among the Badagas, and are not allowed to eat with the other sects. They are scattered through all the different districts, and some of them are to be found in almost every large village. They were the menials and watchmen of the Badagas before they settled on the hills ; and are therefore still looked down upon by them though they are now quite an independent class.

The *Kumbárraru* (potters), like the Bétaru whom we have already mentioned, occupy two villages near Kalhutti. They were formerly servants of

the Rajah of Malékoté and do not intermarry with the Badagas, though they have similar customs, and are like them in personal appearance. With this class concludes our general description of the eighteen sects into which we said that the Badagas were divided.

In the matter of religion, the Badagas, and indeed all the hill tribes, are sunk to a condition little above fetichism. Any thing with them may become an object of adoration, if the headman or the village priest should take a fancy to deify it. As a necessary consequence, however, of this state of things, no real respect is entertained towards their deities, and it is not an uncommon thing to hear the people call them liars, and use opprobrious epithets respecting them. One would think that under these circumstances the knowledge of the true God and His message of love and mercy would be gladly welcomed by these poor idolaters, but there is an attribute in the Christian's God which renders him unacceptable to the carnal mind. A God who is absolutely holy himself, and who requires holiness in those who hope to see His glory, is not what the idolater wishes to have, but a god who will leave him in the quiet enjoyment of his lusts. I have seen the most indelicate per-

formances in the shape of dances and theatrical pieces in front of Badaga temples, and, on bearing testimony to their wickedness, have been told that their god delighted in them.

‡ According to their own calculation, there are no less than 338 idols on the Hills, but they do not feel themselves secure even under the tutelage of such a host of deities as this, and frequently descend to the low country, even as far as Nunjanagoody near Mysore, and make their vows to the idols of the different races living around them. The Badaga Swámies are represented in a variety of forms; but in some cases they are nothing more than the remains of a cromlech, or the ruins of houses constructed by a former race of inhabitants, now extinct. As the attributes which they ascribe to their gods tend to illustrate in some measure their own peculiarities of character, while at the same time the circumstances under which the objects were deified are historical events, it may be as well to describe a few of their principal deities. The information may also be useful to any person labouring for the evangelization of the hill tribes.

As all the Badagas are worshippers of Siva, many of their temples contain *Mahalinga*, who is generally

represented by a long rude stone in the shape of the Lingam. The fane of this deity is always built in a conical form, outside the village, and the sacred bull Bassappa is placed at the entrance of it. A small silver representation of the god is often worn by the men, and afterwards presented as an offering at the temple. I have seen silver ornaments of the value of 50 Rs. offered at these shrines, and been induced to enquire what became of all the wealth which must thus in the course of years have accumulated. Their account is that the silver becomes changed into earth and this seems to satisfy the ignorant Badagas : but I have reason to believe that immediately after the ceremonial at which these offerings are made is concluded, the headman of the village takes possession of the ornaments and appropriates them to his own use. Some of the Mahalinga idols are also called Danni Devaru (cold water gods) in reference to their supposed power of making red-hot coals feel like cold water when the Brahmins walk upon them, in the manner already described.

Another celebrated idol consists of nothing more than an upright stone pillar, which, tradition avers, is the relic of a Rajah's palace : it is named *Kallu-Kambaráya* (Stone pillar god), and has only one

temple. Some years ago the former pillar was removed, and another erected in its stead.

*Kariaráya* is represented in the form of a rusty old knife, and has a light kept burning all night to it. The knife is said to have belonged to a man from the low country, who committed suicide by leaping down the St. Catherine Fall, near Kotagherry. It was found near that spot, and was carried in triumph to the village of Jackanery, where adoration is paid to it to this day.

*Kariabettaráya* is a silver figure intended to symbolize a certain deceased Badaga of the Adikary caste, who had the character of being a good sportsman and a man of unbounded charity towards those around him. Offerings in money are made at his shrine by his descendants, and when the sum amounts to a hundred rupees, it is taken by some of the headmen to the Nellitoré valley, on the eastern slope of the Hills, whence their forefathers originally came, and the whole of it is there expended in feasting.

Ages ago on the death of a certain Badaga chief his wife strangled herself, and both of them were forthwith worshipped as tutelar deities. Their idols go by the name of *Hireadéa* and *Hetté*, and are often found in adjacent temples. Aspiring to similar honors, other Badaga women are related to have

destroyed themselves on the demise of their husbands. The last instance in which this was followed by the desired result, appears to have occurred about 120 years ago, when a female named *Manikamma* shared her husband's death, and was immediately deified. Temples dedicated to these women are to be found in all parts of the Hills. In some of them there are merely brazen vessels ; in others there are figures made of gold or silver ; while all have a piece of cloth carefully deposited in a rattan basket. Once a year this cloth is renewed. Several years since, a golden figure of *Hireadéa*, worth, it is said, thousands of rupees, and after that a silver one of *Hetté*, were stolen by thieves from the low country : both, however, were subsequently replaced by new figures. When questioned as to how it was that their deities allowed themselves to be so unceremoniously dealt with by mere mortals, the poor infatuated *Badagas* reply, that, had their gods not had a desire to emigrate from the Hills, the thieves could not have laid hands on them ; or they console themselves with the belief that the thieves must soon have been overtaken by the divine vengeance, and forfeited their lives for the sacrilegious act of which they had been guilty.

The idol *Mahadésvara* is an imitation of *Nanjun-*

da at Nanjanagoody, in which form Siva is worshipped as the redoubtable deity, who purified the earth by swallowing the poisonous atmosphere created by certain evil spirits.

There are only two representations of *Rungaswámy* or *Ráma* on the Hills. They consist simply of stones, one of which is deposited on Rungaswámy peak, where the Irulas officiate as priests; some of the Badagas, however, go there every year and offer ghee and plantains. The other idol is set up in a village near Hulikall Droog, and is attended to by a Badaga priest. This man is the only Badaga who wears the distinguishing mark of a follower of Vishnoo, and, strange to say, he also performs puja in a temple dedicated to Siva. The legend respecting Rungaswámy or Ráma is, that he sojourned on the Hills on his way to Lanka, and that the Hill tribes showed a preference for him over Rávana, whereupon the latter threw some dust into the air, and pronounced a dreadful curse upon the people, The origin of the two kinds of vermin by which they are infested is attributed by the people to this denunciation, and on this account they are not particular in exerting themselves to get rid of them. The story goes on to say that Ráma, being unable

to remove the effects of the curse, became exceedingly wroth, and, venting his fury on Ravana's sister, cut off her nose, and fixed it as a monument of his vengeance at the South-West point of the plateau of the Hills. The remarkable object known as the Makurty peak, which, according to the Badaga derivation, means 'piece of a nose,' is believed by them to have come into existence in this manner.

Another of the Badaga deities is named *Yerea Swamy*. The person worshipped under this title is said to have been a refractory chief in the Coimbatore country who resisted the efforts of the ruling power to levy a tax from him, and fled to the Hills. The spot where he rested to take breath on the top of the Kaity Ghaut is still marked by a few stones, to which every Badaga makes obeisance, as in Roman Catholic countries passengers do to the cross by the road-side. The legend goes on to say that, being closely pursued, he continued his flight until he reached Billikall, where he secreted himself in a temple; but that the treacherous Badagas betrayed him there and delivered him into the hands of his pursuers; upon which he pronounced a withering curse on the inhabitants, the result of which was that both Billikall and a neighbouring village fell to ruins, never to be re-built.

About forty years ago a certain Lingait, in returning to his village one evening, imagined that he saw a god sitting on a rock. The Badagas thought themselves very fortunate, and immediately erected a temple on the spot to *Jedea Swámy*, as they termed the apparition. Some years afterwards, however, the Lingait committed a crime and absconded; and since that time little veneration has been given to the god he had feigned to discover; especially as no other power was ascribed to *Jedea Swámy* than that which every oleaginous matter possesses, viz. the property of making the hair grow. In one village only are sacrifices now offered to him.

*Ketaraya*, the deity worshipped by the Toreas, is nothing more than a gold nose-ring, which probably once belonged to one of their women. It appears that an effort was formerly made by the Toreas to raise themselves above the Badagas, and their god above the great Mahálinga; but the attempt failed.

*Bété Swámy* (god of Sport) has seldom any temple, being supposed to reside in the forests. A large tree is generally selected for his special resort, and there a goat is occasionally sacrificed to him to propitiate his aid in keeping tigers and

other wild animals away from the villages, and leading them into the traps set for them by the Badagas.

*Gangamma* is a deity who is supposed to be present at every stream, and especially so at the Koondé and Pykáré rivers, into which it was formerly the practice for every owner of cattle, which had to cross them at their height, to throw a quarter of a rupee, because their cattle used frequently to be carried away by the current and destroyed. It is enumerated amongst the great sins of every deceased Badaga, at his funeral, that he had crossed a stream without paying due adoration to *Gangamma*. The Todas likewise venerate this deity.

There is still a host of nameless gods who, the Badagas believe, live in the heart of lofty mountains, and in dense impenetrable forests. Most of them are considered malicious, revengeful beings; and, to keep them in good humour, goats are frequently sacrificed to them. I have already mentioned that a deity (called *Totarodéa*) was supposed to reside in the small wood facing the Mission house at Kaity. When the Missionaries put a stop to the sacrifices which used to be offered there, the natives prophesied that the god would enter the bodies of the Mis-

sionaries and kill them, but as this feat was not performed, they appear to have given him up in disgust.

About two years ago the Badagas of one of the districts were going to erect a temple to Jesus Christ, and to worship him as one of their tutelar deities. They said that the Lord had appeared to them, and told them to believe all that the Missionaries preached. Before I heard anything of the matter, the people had gone so far as to believe that the Lord came every night and took away some milk and plantains, which they used to deposit in a certain place for him. Knowing that it was their priest who was thus imposing upon the credulity of the Badagas, I determined to lay in ambush one night and endeavour to catch the pretended god in the act of consuming his milk and plantains; but immediately afterwards an epidemic broke out in the district and carried off many persons, and I of course heard nothing more of the temple proposed to be erected to Jesus Christ; nor do I think that they will again readily believe that he is to be propitiated by the means devised by their priest.

The manner in which the Hill tribes consult their deities, when they are desirous of ascertaining the

truth in any matter, is simple enough. The man who seeks the information kneels in front of the idol, while the priest stands behind with a quantity of flowers in his hand, which he throws either to the right or left side of the image. If the flowers fall to the right, the enquirer considers the answer as in the affirmative; if to the left, as in the negative. The priest can of course cast them on whichever side he pleases, and where there is a dispute between two parties, the settlement of the question never fails to be in favor of the party who pays the largest *douceur* to the priest.

Some years ago a god was asked in this manner whether my preaching was true or not, and of course the oracular reply was that it was false. About three years since, the Badagas of one district stole the wife of a Badaga of another district, and by a strange coincidence the stolen girl soon after died. One party was desirous of learning whether the other had bribed the Kurumbas to kill the young woman by sorcery, and having recourse to the expedient before mentioned of demanding flowers from the village idol, received what they considered a conclusive reply that such had been the case. As the matter gives a clear insight into

the superstitious notions of the Badagas I will briefly relate the particulars.

After walking one day from village to village and finding the people absent from home, I at length came to one where I was able to address a tolerably large assembly. At the conclusion of my discourse, I found that it was too late to return to my little hut, and therefore laid myself down in the verandah of the headman's house and fell asleep. At midnight when all was still I was suddenly aroused by a voice near me saying Swamy ! Swamy !, and on starting up, beheld a man kneeling down at my side. On asking him what he wanted at that late hour of the night, he besought me to say whether I loved him or not, and on my assuring him of my love, he desired me to give him my advice in a matter that oppressed his mind. He said that being a disconsolate widower with children, he was anxious to marry again ; but that the only girl who was willing to have him was unfortunately already the wife of another man ; so that there was no alternative, if they were to be united, but to carry her off by force : that her father had consented to this being done, but that he was anxious to know beforehand whether the enterprize was likely to prove successful or not.

I told him that God's blessing could never rest on such a union, and did all in my power to dissuade him from the commission of so great a crime ; adding that he would certainly be punished, and that the young woman would probably soon be removed by death. The man went away greatly disappointed, and my sleep was entirely broken ; so I rose very early next morning and walked to my little bungalow. On my way to the village of the girl's husband, whom I intended to apprise of the conspiracy against him, who should meet me but the man who had disturbed my rest the night before. He immediately prostrated himself before me and implored me, as he feared my anger and the vengeance of my God, to lay my hand on his head and say that all should be well. This I refused to do, and adhered to what I had said the previous night.

About a fortnight afterwards I visited the same village, and found, that, as the man threatened to drown himself if he could not gain his end, his relatives had aided him in his enterprize and succeeded in carrying off the object of his love. To have interfered further than I did might have led to serious consequences, for experience had

taught me that, if thwarted in their wishes, the Badaga women do not hesitate to commit suicide by swallowing opium. I had hoped, however, that after my denunciation of the crime the man would have been afraid to carry out his purpose.

Only three months later I went to the village again, and observing that all the Badagas had shaved off their mustaches, which with them is a token of mourning, I enquired what was the cause, and was told to my grief, that the poor young woman, who had been taken from her husband under the circumstances above narrated, was now no more ! The conduct of the people towards me on this occasion was most peculiar. They were all afraid of me ; and some thought me a god, whilst others believed me to be an enchanter, because I had predicted that the displeasure of the Almighty would certainly be manifested against the parties concerned in the crime. A few days afterwards I attended a large gathering of Badagas, and on approaching was met by the chief man of the assembly, who prostrated himself before me and begged me to assure him that I was not angry with them, and if so to comfort him by bestowing my blessing upon him. This was a painful position to find myself placed in and I told the man that I was a mere sinful mortal

like himself, but that it was my constant prayer that all their hearts might be opened to receive the greatest of all blessings, that of Salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. I felt that it was a good opportunity for preaching, and I did so with much liberty and joy, in the full belief that the Lord would soon gather these poor lost sheep into His fold.

The matter did not, however end here. On the abduction of the young person before referred to, her sister-in-law out of revenge also deserted her husband, and soon afterwards she likewise died. Upon this each party charged the other with having bribed the Kurumbas to kill the girls by their magical enchantments; and, one of them endeavoured to instigate an accusation against the other party of having attempted to murder some poor Kurumbas on suspicion of sorcery; but the murderous demonstration was so clumsily got up that the Kurumbas saw through it all, and knowing that their lives were never really in danger preferred no complaint, and in course of time the mutual animosity and intrigues of the parties were brought to a termination.

The case above related is by no means a solitary one. It was formerly a common practice for rich Badagas to hire forty or fifty Todas to go on wife-

stealing expeditions, and carry off by force the wives of other Badagas, and I know of a case in which one unfortunate girl was three times taken from her husband, to whom she had each time managed to escape and return. The most painful consequences used to follow such crimes, for rather than submit to be separated from their own husbands many young women used to commit suicide by taking opium. I am personally aware of five or six cases in which this was the result. Happily these mal-practices on the part of the Badagas have now been entirely put a stop to by the authorities. I may here mention that a very little provocation is needed to induce a Badaga woman to destroy herself by the above means. Opium is a common production on these Hills; and the words, "I will swallow opium, and kill myself," are so frequently on their lips that they even use the expression towards myself, when in the course of preaching I denounce some of their objectionable customs, and endeavour to persuade them to give them up. What a fearful state of practical infidelity, notwithstanding all their hosts of deities, must the people be in, and how faint a conviction, if any, can they have of the immortality of the soul, when they can so recklessly enter upon their eternal doom, and terminate so indiffer-

ently the period allowed them for making their peace with God.

I now proceed to describe the ceremonies performed at a Badaga funeral. As mentioned with respect to the Todas, there is more appearance of festivity on these occasions than on any others; young and old bedecking themselves in their best attire. When there is no further hope of recovery and the person is at the point of death, a small gold coin of the value of about a quarter of a rupee and called *Birianhana*, is dipped in ghee and placed between his lips for him to swallow if he is able; if not, it is wrapped in a piece of cloth and bound to his arm. Like the Romans of old, the Badagas thus provide their departing friends with money for the supposed purpose of paying their expenses on the road to the other world, and this coin they think is sufficient for the journey till they have passed over the thread-bridge which they suppose separates the valley of death from the invisible world.

As soon as life is extinct, preparations are made for the funeral, which usually takes place the following morning; and messengers are sent to the relations of the deceased living in other villages. Some persons also go to the forests to fetch fuel, while others are despatched to call the Kotas, who,

as the musicians of the Hills, are always required to attend on these occasions.

As soon as the wood is brought from the forest, the Badagas proceed to prepare the funeral car, which is a high tower-like machine, covered with cloth, and intended to be burnt with the corpse. The Kotas also employ themselves in making bows and arrows, if the deceased was a man ; or a rice-beater, if a woman. When the funeral car is completed, the corpse is brought out on a native cot and placed under it ; and in the case of a male, all the agricultural and other implements of the deceased, together with his flute and walking stick, are laid near the corpse, as well as the dry skin of a pumpkin to serve as a drinking vessel in the other world. Nothing further is done that day.

On the following morning, people assemble from all sides, and then begins the death-dance, in which all the male relations join, and go round and round the corpse. As other people arrive they also take part, while the women stand by and look on. The chief object of the men appears to be to please the women, and so wild and excited do they become that they often dress themselves in female attire, and go through the most obscene gestures. Not unfrequently a woman in the crowd loses all self-

control, and rushes wildly into the dance, with a rice-beater or sickle in hand. If present on any of these occasions, I make a point of testifying against the impropriety of such exhibitions : sometimes they listen to me and cease ; at other times I have been obliged to turn away, and in some cases when I have done so, the headman has driven away the actors in these indecent performances, and called me back again.

After the sun has passed the zenith, the spirit of the deceased is supposed to have entered heaven, and the dancing ceases. During the whole time of the performance, the nearest relatives walk round the corpse, shedding tears and carrying food in a plate or a basket, and relate all the good qualities of the deceased. The people then collect round the corpse and carry it outside the village. The next process is that of transferring the sins of the deceased to a calf, prepared beforehand for this purpose, and which, after being so used, is never afterwards devoted to common purposes. The sins of the departed friend are repeated aloud by one of the Badagas, according to a set form, and the last word of each sentence is joined in by all the bystanders. The Badagas believe that, by this con-

fession of the sins of the deceased and laying them on the calf, complete forgiveness is ensured.

After this the nearest relatives walk three times round the corpse with earth on their heads and hatchets in their hands, and put a little dust on the face of the corpse. It is then removed to the banks of a stream and there burnt ; all the cloths with which the funeral car is covered, as well as the jewels and implements of the deceased are burnt with the corpse. It is considered a very bad omen if it rains during a funeral. It is believed that the deceased must have committed some very great crime, and that otherwise heaven would not shed tears on the occasion. Next morning the ashes of the corpse are collected and thrown into the stream, and if any bones should be found, not consumed by the flames, they are covered by large stones. The male relations then shave their heads and beards, in which manner they exhibit their outward signs of mourning for departed relatives. Low caste people from the plains sometimes come to the place of burning, and are permitted to appropriate any small pieces of gold and silver which they may be able to find.

The following is the Canarese poem sung by the Badagas at their funerals. It is recited three times

by one of the principal men present in front of the corpse, before it is committed to the flames, and the last word of every sentence is repeated by all the relations.

“————— is dead

Here is Bassava (the holy ox) born of the cow Banigè.

He (deceased) may have committed 1300 sins ; let them go to Bassava's feet.

He has killed a snake, it is a sin.

He has killed a lizard ; it is a sin.

He has killed a frog ; it is a sin.

He has caused quarrels between brothers ; it is a sin.

He has removed the boundary-mark of a field ; it is a sin.

He has made a complaint to the Government ; it is a sin.

He has poisoned the food of others ; it is a sin.

He has shown strangers the wrong road ; it is a sin.

He has shown his teeth to his sisters ; it is a sin.

He has drawn milk from the holy cow ; it is a sin.

He has directed his back to the sun ; it is a sin.

He has drunk water at a brook without first making obeisance thereto ; it is a sin.

He has envied his neighbour because he had a good buffalo ; it is a sin.

He has ploughed with an ox too young for work ; it is a sin.

He has desired another wife, while his own wife was still living ; it is a sin.

He has refused fire to those who were suffering from cold, and meat to the hungry ; it is a sin.

He has cast his relations out of doors, and invited strangers instead of them ; it is a sin.

He has given no alms to the poor ; it is a sin.

When his cloth was caught by a thorn, he tore it away in anger ; it is a sin.

He has sat on a couch, while his father-in-law was seated on the floor ; it is a sin.

He has cut away the bund of a tank ; it is a sin.

He has lifted up his foot against his mother ; it is a sin.

Though his own sins, and those of his parents amount to 1300, let them all go to Bassava's feet. The chamber of death shall be opened ; the sea shall draw near ; the thread-like bridge shall remain firm ; the dragon's mouth shall be closed ;

L

the door of hell shall be shut ; the mansions of heaven shall be thrown open. He may go safely though the path be thorny : the silvery pillar shall be near ; he may approach the golden wall, and the burning pillar shall be cold.

Yes, let all his sins be forgiven, and may it be well with him !

Yea, let all be well !”

It is strange that, in the midst of so much that is unmeaning and puerile, in the poem sung at a Badaga funeral, there should be found expressions which so closely correspond with precepts recorded in the Holy Scriptures. How this has been brought about, it is no part of my present object to enquire : would that these poor wanderers could be prevailed upon to reject all the absurdities with which their religion abounds, and to receive in their stead the comforting truths of Christianity.

The concluding portion of the above poem clearly proves that the Badagas believe in a future state ; and, though their notions on this point are imbued with materialism, there are no traces of their belief in the common Hindu doctrine of metempsychosis, or transmigration of souls. The following poem is intended to describe the occupations of the dead

in the other world, according to the tenor of their deeds in the present life.

“ The woman Hattitippé, having a desire to see the other world, stood between the Neilgherries and the invisible world, and thus addressed herself to her companion : ‘ O brother Simpleton ! if I bend down, the tails of cattle appear, and if I stand erect, their heads become visible ; whose cattle are they ? ’ ‘ They belong to those who died without proper funeral rites being performed, having had no relatives ; and now their property has lapsed to the Government of the invisible world.’

‘ That is true, O brother Simpleton ! Then there are men hanging from a tree, with ropes round their necks ; who are they ? ’ ‘ Do you not know, O sister Hattitippé ! Have you not heard it with your ears ? Those are men who committed suicide on the Neilgherries, by hanging themselves. There they hang for ever ! ’

‘ There are people in a noisome ditch smoking tobacco ; who are they, O brother Simpleton ? ’ ‘ They are those who illtreated the widows on the Neilgherries, and took away their property, and levied money from the poor. Such crimes have they been guilty of ; therefore they are all cast into a

noisome ditch, and have nothing to eat ; instead of meat they have only tobacco to smoke. Yes, they are chiefs who have oppressed the poor.'

'O brother ! who are pouring water in yonder garden?' 'Do you not know? They are those who killed themselves on the Hills by eating opium, and now they water the plants : till they die must they water the opium garden.'

'O brother ! In a narrow path on the hill-side where only buffaloes can go, there lies a child covered with musquitoes, and crying in distress ; whose child is it?' 'It is the child of a woman who, when she saw the children of strangers begging bread, said within herself 'They do not belong to me,' and would not comfort them ; now her own child is left without any one to comfort it.' 'O brother ! I will go and suckle the child.' 'Do not venture there, O sister ! If you touch the child, the crow-mouthed giant there will devour you. All sins committed against children on the Hills will be made manifest in the other world.'

'Here is a beautiful field of grain with ears an ell in length, and thick as a potter's vessel ; whose field is it, O brother?' 'It is the field of those who lived righteously in the world : they tilled their own

land and assisted others in their labor without envy ; they gave alms to those who came ; they fed the hungry and made a fire to warm those who were cold ; they clothed the naked and relieved the poor : should they sow their seed upon a rock, they would nevertheless reap a bountiful harvest.'

' O brother Bee-eye ! I see some persons with their hair nicely smoothed ; they have a cloth only round their loins ; they have washed in warm water, and go to milk their buffaloes. What a large milk vessel they have, and yet they milk it entirely full !' ' These are people who, when the cattle of strangers strayed, took them back to their rightful owners ; therefore they have now an abundance of milk.'

' O brother ! there are people digging up red mud ; who are they ?' ' They are those who, when they were taking a meal and saw a beggar coming, hid their food from him. Now, in the other world, they have fallen into a ditch, and in answer to their cries for food are told to eat mud.'

' In the verandah of a white-washed house there are persons writing and doing the work of Moon-shees ; who are they, O brother ?' ' They are people who in this world never slandered others,

nor complained to the Government, nor poisoned the food of others ; but who acted according to the wisdom which God had bestowed upon them. They walked in the ways of God with their God-given feet, they saw with their God-given eyes, they labored with their God-given hands, they ate God-given food, and did not oppress strangers. They have now the honorable occupation of scribes in the other world.'

' O brother ! who are they whom I see bound to a tree ?' They appear to be always talking, without having any one to listen to them.' ' Do you not know, O sister ! They are abandoned women who went astray, and now they have nothing to eat and nothing to cover them.'

' O brother ! there, near the road leading to the plains is a fiery pillar and a river : from one shore to the other there is a bridge of thread ; what is it ?' ' The house you see here is the abode of bliss, and the one you see there is the place of woe.' O brother ! I wish to go to *Heaven* ! ' Why have I come here, to witness this fearful sight ? If a splendid funeral is made after my death ; if my corpse is burnt to ashes ; and if I pay the toll at the custom-house, *can* I attain to heaven ? or, brother, must I sink into hell ?' ' Alas, my sister, *I know not !* ''

I have said nothing about the marriage customs of the Badagas because they can scarcely be said to have any. The marriage tie is so very loose that they do not think it worth their while to spend much money on nuptial occasions. The husband may send his wife back to her parents, or the wife may leave her husband, at any time ; and instances frequently occur in which a man or a woman makes three or four probationary contracts of this kind before a permanent union is arranged. The marriage ceremonies observed differ slightly according to the station in life of the parties, and their ability or willingness to have any display on the occasion. In a recent instance some Kota musicians were assembled at the village of the bride ; the bridegroom came, attended by a few of his relations without even putting on a clean cloth, spent a few rupees in feasting his friends, and then took the girl home as his wife. In another case which I witnessed, the future husband was too proud to stir from his own house, so there was nothing for it, but to take his bride elect, *to him*. When she arrived, she prostrated herself before him ; upon which he put his foot on her head and said "live ! live ! go and fetch water." This she immediately did, and the wed-

ding was over. The father of the bride generally gives her a dowry in the shape of an ox or a buffalo ; and endless disputes arise regarding the return of the dower if the husband turns his wife out of doors, or if she voluntarily leaves him.

The Wodeas and Kongas, two classes of lingaits, are the only castes among the Badagas who make any display on the occasion of their marriages. I was recently invited to a wedding feast given on the marriage of two couples of Kongas. A shed was erected and decorated in a rustic way with garlands and branches of trees, and in the middle was a small enclosure with curiously carved benches for the special use of the happy couples. When all was ready the parties were called out from the house of their relatives immediately behind the shed, and had to parade two or three times round the enclosure, preceded by a priest with a light and a man burning incense, and followed by another man carrying a basket containing wheat, millet, and flowers. After this the brides and bridegrooms seated themselves on the carved benches, and a stool with a plate upon it was placed before them. The relations then, each in turn, strewed some of the grain and flowers over the young couples, and

at the same time dropped a piece of money into the plate; the women all the while enlivening the guests with their songs. The happy pairs were then left alone for a short time, and after that, betel-nut was given to them, at which stage of the ceremony they folded their hands and made a respectful salaam to all the spectators assembled. This was followed by their taking water and pouring it over each other's feet, after which they went down to the bank of the stream, the bridegrooms carrying plates with grain and sugar, and the brides each a water-pot. The parties then threw grain and sugar three times into the stream, as an offering to Gangamma. The brides then made small pools of water, and on the question being put by their relatives "who made this pool?" they answered "my father and my mother." After this the company were regaled with a hearty meal, and the proceedings concluded with a dance, the music being provided by the Kotas, who had been present the whole time and rent the air with their wild notes, excepting while the women were singing, and they were themselves enjoying the repast prepared for them by the host. On the termination of the ceremony, I took occasion to say a few words respecting the views of

M

Christians as to the marriage state, and the people were constrained to admit that our marriage customs were preferable to theirs.

On the subject of feasts I may mention that these are sometimes given on a very grand scale by rich Badagas, in honor of the memory of departed relatives. They often last a whole week and hundreds of people are entertained at them. I was lately present at one of them and had an opportunity of closely observing the habits of the Badagas on festive occasions. The scene that occurred upon the announcement that the meal was ready, can only be likened to the rush of a pack of hounds to their food at the sound of the huntsman's horn; and the general want of decorum throughout the entertainment was so shameful, that several men were obliged to pace up and down with sticks in their hands for the purpose of keeping the guests in order.

Festive entertainments of this description are only given by the Badagas once in every eight or ten years, and they are intended to bring to memory all who have died within those periods. Sometimes five or six hundred Rupees are expended at them, and from two to four hundred persons a day invited to partake of the refreshments provided. Next

to consuming the edibles, dancing is the principal occupation on these occasions, the men being dressed in coats made somewhat after the Mussulman fashion. All kinds of excesses are indulged in, and the din and uproar are so great as to render it almost impossible for a European to endure them for many days. I was recently at one of these festivals, and was happily enabled to rescue a poor Toda from being subjected to a fiery ordeal in order to clear himself from a charge of sorcery. He was accused of having killed by enchantment three buffaloes belonging to one of the headmen, and was required to carry a red-hot iron in his hands under the pretence that, if he was innocent, he would suffer no harm. He was a quiet, inoffensive old man, and trembled with fear, fully believing from past experience that the Badagas would carry out their cruel design. I, however, interfered, and after putting a few questions to the Toda, declared my conviction that he was not guilty, and added that I should consider any injury done to him as one inflicted upon myself. It was then proposed by some one present that the matter should be submitted for the decision of some redoubtable deity near Goendelpett, who, it was believed, would destroy the

Toda if he was guilty. I availed myself of this opportunity to tell the people how happy I felt in the hands of God, without whose will not a hair of my head could perish ; whilst they were always in fear of devils and enchanter's, because they would not believe that God loved them. I returned to my hut thoughtful and heavy-hearted at all the wickedness that I had witnessed, and at the hopeless condition, humanly speaking, of these poor people ; but my Heavenly Master, whose love I had proclaimed, cheered my spirits with the assurance that, though in all these revelries Satan had exercised unlimited sway, the day would come when Christ alone shall reign supreme.

Perhaps nothing tends more to illustrate the character of a people than the tenor of their *proverbs* and old sayings. A knowledge of these, besides affording an insight into Badaga notions of right and wrong, I have found of great service in the Missionary cause. Often when the persons to whom I have been preaching have been listless and indifferent, a happily selected proverb, quoted in exemplification of what I was saying, has had the effect of exciting an interest in the discourse and of fixing their attention. The following are a few of

the Badaga proverbs, but they have a great many more which are of less general application and which have been directed chiefly against the inhabitants of some particular district or village.

“Where no master is, there the harvest will be bad.

If our silver is bad, why do we quarrel with the goldsmith ?

If you wear your brother's cloth, it is as if you dressed yourself up in a tiger's skin.

When he had nothing he was content ; now that he is enriched, he is discontented.

If you prefer a complaint to the Magistrate, it is as if you had put poison into your adversary's food.

Do not exalt thyself above the king, nor separate thyself from thy gooroo.

Walk not before the ruler ; it is as if you walked behind your horse.

Riches acquired in public employment are as a pillar erected in a swamp.

Though we may lose our own property, it is not right to ruin a stranger.

Do every thing at the proper season ; some people lose the harvest of a whole year on account of a single meal.

In trying to save a drop of ghee, he upset the ghee-pot.

The son of a king sees better with half an eye than a blockhead with both his eyes.

All gamblers are consigned to hell.

Watch the gambols of a child, and you may foretell how it will behave as a man.

If you have a strange dream, rise and ponder over it.

It is as if a giant had swallowed a fly.

As the mother is, so are the children.

If you relieve a beggar very often, he will in the end settle in your house.

If the curry is without savour, you can put salt into it; but if the salt has lost its savour, with what can it be seasoned?

What is the use of having pickles in a jar, if you are too stingy to allow them to be eaten?

Too much eating causes panting: too many words give rise to quarrels.

He chatters like a chicken which has eaten salt.

The herdsman need not know the quantity of grain in the storehouse.

If you yoke a buffalo and an ox together, the one

will push for the swamp and the other for the hill-tops.

What knows the monkey of a looking-glass, or the jackal of a temple ?

If you cannot get a good wife, marry a bad one.

If you lend to the Kotas, you will become poor ; if to the Todas, you are an idiot ; if to the Kurumbas, they will kill you.

If you have acquired any knowledge, speak ; if not, you had better be silent.

The sluggard, like the peacock, is afraid of rain.

A young ox and a young girl are both inconstant ; do not trust them.

At the tip of his tongue he has sugar : but at the back of it nothing but venom.

Of what use is a violin to a deaf man, or a mirror to one who is blind ?

An honest man has only millet to eat, while the rogue lives upon rice.

If you are not up to cunning, do not go to Jack-talls ; if you are poor, do not go to Kaity.

You may close a well, but you cannot shut the mouth of another.

Submit to what you cannot alter.

An angry man consumes himself, like the snake in the moon during an eclipse.

If we are kind to orphans, our own children will grow up of themselves.

If one is in a boat, can the stream carry him away ? if one is riding on an elephant, can a wild hog injure him ?

The son must pay his father's debts.

If a person is presented with a buffalo, will he ask whether she gives milk ?

A passionate wife is as bad as a house that leaks.

You may deceive a man, but who can deceive God ?

He has healed others, but cannot cure himself.

You may pour water into milk, but it is milk still ; my mother may be like a demon, she is still my mother.

To a rich man even the wild elephant makes obeisance ; but against the poor the little ant lifts up a stone.

If you tell him the truth, he will strike you.

Riches are the cause of enmity: poverty is like gold.

A single coal does not burn well ; a companionless traveller finds the journey tedious.

If you look at the outward appearance, it is a fortress ; look inside, and it is empty.

A miser is like a tree, with fruit which you cannot get at.

If a Holea (a menial) becomes rich, he will carry an umbrella at night to shade him from the sun.

It is a turban, whether it goes once or ten times round the head.

He does not ask his friend to go away, but he makes such a smoke in the house that his friend is obliged to leave.

Children are like rain from the clouds.

As long as you hold it in your hand, it is a vessel ; throw it on the ground, and you will have only useless pieces."

The Badagas are more industrious than the Todas, and at certain seasons, in sowing their seed and weeding their crops, expose themselves greatly to the inclemency of the weather ; while the life of the Toda is one of perfect idleness, their sole occupation being that of tending their herds, except at the periods when they go round to the villages to levy their tax of grain, to which they lay claim as lords of the soil. The Badagas, however, do not much appreciate the value of time, otherwise they could easily raise sufficient grain to supply themselves with food for the whole year, instead of which they live in a great

N

measure upon what is brought up from the plains. Their women on the other hand are never to be seen idle; if there should be no work for them in the field, they bring fuel from the woods, or occupy themselves in some other way. On account of their industrious habits a large dowry amounting to 150 or 200 Rupees is often given by Badaga youths for their wives. They are more modest than the Toda women, and superior to them in every respect.

My description of the habits and customs of the Badagas has been necessarily a long one, as they are the most numerous, enterprising, and intelligent of all the hill tribes. I will close my remarks on this race by giving the following tale, which is intended to illustrate the necessity of charity, and the punishment that awaits those who neglect or despise this virtue. Amongst other things it explains the object of the "fiery pillar," which the former account of the other world, according to Badaga notions, left in doubt.

"A certain rich man had two daughters to whom he gave the name of Bálé. He cultivated his land with twelve yoke of oxen, his buffaloes were more than could be numbered, and he had fourteen boxes

full of treasure. But his eldest daughter was very wicked and uncharitable. The gods seeing this were grieved, and said that they had never seen such enormous sins committed anywhere as here. They therefore destroyed all the rich man's property, and within a week not a handful of grain remained in the house where hundreds of the poor used to satisfy their hunger. Thereupon the farmer went to a soothsayer, and enquired why this calamity had come upon him; to which the latter replied that it was in consequence of the iniquities committed by his daughters, and that the best thing he could do would be to send them quietly away. This he did; and the sisters went forth, not knowing where they were to find food or shelter. Coming to the house of a wealthy man they offered themselves as servant-maids; but ere long their master was reduced to poverty, and learning from the soothsayer that his ruin was the result of the curse which hung over the two girls, he sent them peaceably away. They wished to stop in a plantain-garden, and live on the fruit until death should relieve their sufferings, but at their approach the trees fell down, and the gardener threw stones at them and drove them away. The same thing happened in an orchard of Jack-trees, and af-

terwards in a cocoanut-tope. The girls shed so many tears that a sparrow could have bathed in them. In despair they determined to enter the den of a tiger, in the hope that he would devour them ; but the tiger ran away when they drew near. ' What sins have we committed, O sister ! that we cannot die ! ' cried one of them. ' If we go into a bear's cave perhaps we shall find death. ' They went in and threw stones upon the bear to irritate him, but he avoided them and fled. They swallowed opium, but it returned and had no effect. They blindfolded themselves and ran into a stream, but the waters divided and left them on dry ground. They set the grass in the jungle on fire, but the flames went to the right and to the left, and left the spot on which they stood unharmed. They sat on a rock in order to throw themselves over a precipice, but the rock split in pieces under them. They could not die : death would not receive them.

“ We are husbandless and childless, we *must* and will die, said they. Then throwing away the chattels they possessed, they travelled staff in hand, in the direction of the Mukurty peak, and mounted a hill, which an ox attempting to climb would have fallen backwards, and then descended

into a deep abyss where a buffalo could not have kept its footing. At last they met a shepherd and asked him the way to heaven, but the sheep fled, and the shepherd became enraged and gave no answer. 'O sister! it is because we sinned when we were young that we cannot find the way.' They then met an outcast, clothed in a tiger's skin, who asked them for alms. 'What money have we to give' said they, 'we have come here to die; tell us, what pillar of fire is that on yonder hill-side?' 'The wicked have erected it, and if you have committed a crime you must embrace the fiery pillar, and be burnt to ashes. They will cast you into hell, and the raven-mouthed giant will torture and devour you. 'O brother! who are they that are carrying water in that level place?' 'They are the opium eaters who killed themselves with that drug.' Alas, brother! where is the husband of my youth?' 'Hear, O Bálé women! the sins you committed on the Neilgherries are now made manifest, go ye away from me.' They went forward and approached the thread-bridge; and saw the mouth of the dragon, and drew near to the fiery pillar. Five angels then came to them and commanded them to follow, and seizing them violently by the neck pulled them to-

wards the burning pillar and told them to embrace it. The god and his wife were on the opposite side and invited them to come through the fire. They answered, 'O god! we have not drunk a tankful of water that we should be able to pass unburnt through the flames.' While they were thus speaking two virgins in white robes, bright as the sun and the moon, glided by. They had two bracelets on the right arm, and a beautiful bangle on the left, a necklace on their sable necks, and a green umbrella in their hand; they walked as if they walked on milk and ghee. They advanced and embraced the fiery pillar, crossed over the thread-bridge to the opposite shore, and fell prostrate before their god, who raised them up and placed them at his right hand. 'O ye gods! who are these virgins?' 'They are of righteous parents, and have not walked in sin. Whosoever dies free from sin shall come hither to the presence of his god.' The Bálé women then said to themselves, 'as those virgins have passed through the fire, we may be able to do so too.' But as they came near to the fiery pillar, the fire got hold of them and consumed them, and the five angels cast them into hell. There the raven-mouthed giant tortured them, and the dragon of hell prey-

ed upon them ; and after seven days he immersed them in oil and burned them on seven piles of wood, and then he transformed the elder sister into an Euphorbia plant, and the younger he took and threw into the interior of a pig."

I now proceed to give some description of the KURUMBAS, of whom however there is not much to be said. They live, not on the plateau of the hills, like the Todas and Badagas, but on the slopes, and in the most feverish places ; they are, however, in constant intercourse with those two tribes, for whom they act as priests and musicians. The Kurumba villages consist only of a few huts, with a small extent of cultivation near them, and are known by the general designation of *Motta*. The Todas divide the Kurumbas into three different classes ;—the Moottoo Kurumbas, the Naya Kurumbas, and the Panias. The two latter live in the Wynaad. The Panias are not looked upon as sorcerers, as are the other two classes, and are chiefly employed as the laborers of the Badagas who have settled in the Wynaad.

Each Badaga district has its own Kurumba priest, who comes up at the ploughing season, and sows the first handful of grain ; and at harvest time also before the sickle is put to the crop. And if a standing crop should at any time be attacked by insects, he is sent for, and has to go through the ceremony of lowing like a calf ; which the Badagas believe has the effect of killing the insect. For these services the Kurumba either receives remuneration in grain, or, if he is paid in money, receives a quarter of a rupee for every yoke of oxen required to plough the land.

The Moottoo and Naya Kurumbas are believed to possess the power of killing men by sorcery, and so greatly are they feared that, if a Badaga meet a Kurumba in a jungle alone, death from sheer terror is not unfrequently the consequence. I have often endeavoured to make them acknowledge that they possessed no such power as that ascribed to them, and they have confessed it to me privately ; but it is so much their interest to foster the superstitious fears of the Badagas that they cannot be persuaded publicly to admit that the whole thing is an imposture. In former years the conviction that they were constantly working the ruin of the

other hill tribes by supernatural means was so strong, that they were murdered in great numbers both by the Todas and Badagas, and also by another race who live at the foot of the hills, the Sholigas. Only about twelve years ago, from sixty to seventy Kurumbas were cruelly murdered on suspicion of witchcraft, but no traces of the perpetrators of the crime could be discovered. It would appear from the traditions preserved in the Badaga poems that no Kurumba was ever allowed to amass any wealth. No sooner was it known that one of them was richer than his neighbours and likely to become influential than he was accused of sorcery and killed. A fearful story is told of a Kurumba having been beaten to death on a charge of having personated the husband of a rich Badaga lady.

In order to show what a blind superstitious feeling possesses the people in respect of the Kurumbas I mention the following anecdote. A short time since the eldest son of a Badaga headman having been taken ill, I was called in to prescribe for him. The symptom of which he complained was that there was a hardness in his stomach, as if there was a piece of wood in it. Thinking it was only a severe cold, I gave him a diaphoretic, and after it had taken effect,

the patient declared himself much better; and nothing further was done. A few days after, however, I was much to my surprise informed that the man had died, and was asked to attend the funeral. On my reaching the spot, the father of the deceased begged me earnestly to open and examine the body in the presence of about 600 persons there assembled, because he and all his relations were convinced that one of the sacrificing Kurumbas had been bribed by certain Badagas, with whom they were at enmity about some land, to destroy the lad's life by magic. I declined to interfere, defended the poor Kurumba, thinking that he would stand a fair chance of being murdered, and availed myself of the opportunity of inviting the people to come to the Lord Jesus, who had power over life and death, and that they would have no cause for further alarm about the Kurumbas. On my repairing to the place again next morning in the hope of finding another congregation, I was met by all the people, who told me that now they had a proof that I was wrong in defending the Kurumbas and in denying their supernatural power, for on examining the ashes of the burnt corpse in their presence, the sacrificing Kurumba himself had taken from the

stomach, two legs of a fowl and a piece of a cactus, reduced to charcoal, and also some raw grain half consumed by the flames ; which fully accounted for the violent pain in that region, of which the deceased had complained ! Of course all attempts on my part to persuade the Badagas that the Kurumba could not have introduced these articles into the stomach of the lad, during life, were rendered futile by the asseverations of the Kurumba himself, who was so tenacious of the power he and his associates exercised over the minds of the Badagas that, in order to strengthen the same, he had practised an imposture, which might even have cost him his head.

There are strong grounds for supposing that the Kurumbas once occupied and cultivated the plateau of the Hills, and were driven thence by the Todas into the unhealthy localities which they now inhabit, on the pretext of their being a race of sorcerers, whose presence was a bane to the happiness of the other hill tribes. Several spots near the Badaga villages bear the name of "Motta" to this day, and traces of houses are still visible ; and in one place a stone enclosure for buffaloes is to be seen, which, as I gather from an old piece of

Badaga poetry, formerly belonged to a rich Kurumba, who was murdered by the Todas, at the instigation of the Badagas. When I first commenced my missionary labors on the Neilgherries, and whilst I was considered by the natives as their great friend, my object having been then but imperfectly understood, I was repeatedly asked to rid them of the Kurumbas, that is, to get them hunted down like wild beasts and exterminated, and they would remember my name with gratitude for ever. The Todas and Badagas say that the Kurumbas are the enemies of their peace, and that they cannot live without killing them. A short time since I discovered the site of a former Kurumba town, of the existence of which I was well aware, but which I had never been able to trace out. It is in the heart of a dense forest, totally unfrequented by the natives and probably never penetrated by any European. There are about a dozen cromlechs, none of which had before been opened, standing on the spot, which is known by the name of "the Chinnapattana slope."

And this brings me to the subject of the cairns and cromlechs found in various parts of the hills, which, if not constructed by a race now extinct,

were I think probably the work of the ancestors of the Kurumbas. I have mentioned reasons above for supposing that eight or nine centuries ago, about which period I believe the Todas first settled on the Neilgherries, the Kurumbas were in possession of the table-land ; I may also state that this is further distinctly asserted in a tradition preserved by the Kotas. During the nine years that I have labored amongst and mixed with the hill-tribes, I have never found the Todas in any way interested in the cairns, whilst the fact of their making no objection to their being opened, taken in connection with the circumstance of the contents frequently consisting of parts of plough-shares, sickles, and other implements of husbandry, showing that the cairns were constructed by an agricultural race, which the Todas never were, are to me convincing proofs that they are not the work of the Todas of a past generation. The Badagas and Kotas, on the other hand, are to a certain degree afraid to approach them, except in the presence of Europeans. The Badagas believe them to be haunted by spirits, to whom they offer prayer. One of their prayers runs thus :—“ O goddess of the cairns ! open my eyes, that I may discover the horn of a jackal !” their be-

rief being that in former ages that animal had horns, the possession of one of which ensured an abundance of wealth to the person who had the good fortune to find it.

I was once on a preaching excursion in a district near the southern boundary of the hills, and not very far from the principal Kurumba village, called Mulli, and after the labours of the day felt a curiosity to open a cairn which happened to be in the neighbourhood. Much to my surprise however the Badaga headmen present would not permit me to do so, not on account of any objections they had themselves to make, but because, as they said, it was the residence of the god of the Kurumbas, who came up frequently from Mulli in order to worship the god of their forefathers. This is the only occasion on which I have ever known any of the hill tribes venerate a cairn, as the depository of the ashes of a deceased ancestor; but viewed in connection with what I have already stated, I think it is sufficient to justify the supposition that the Kurumbas of old, when masters of the table land, may have constructed these remarkable cemeteries; and this consideration is further borne out by the fact that the common tradition amongst Todas, Badagas, and

**Kotas**, is that they are the graves of a very wicked race of people, who, though diminutive in stature, were at the same time powerful enough to raise the large blocks of granite of which the walls of Hooli-caldroog are built ; and that God drove them from the hills on account of their wickedness ; a description which would well apply to the case of the Kurumbas, who, in addition to being feared and detested, are as a race much stunted in their growth. The cromlechs were doubtless the work of the same people as the cairns, and were probably intended to serve a two-fold purpose ; first, to commemorate the exploits of the heroes, in whose honor they were erected ; for which reason hunting and other scenes are sometimes sculptured upon them ; and secondly to be used as places of sepulture, and on this account human ashes are generally found in them, with two different kinds of earthen vessels, probably deposited by the relatives of the deceased with food and drink in them at the time of interment. The rings of upright stones are said by the natives to be merely the remains of enclosures used in former years for the protection of their cattle, and are called by the Todas and Badagas "our buffalo stables."

According to one of their traditions, the KOTAS formerly lived on a mountain in Mysore, called Kollimalé, after which they named the first village they built on the Neilgherries. They now occupy seven tolerably large villages, all of which are known by the general name of Kotagiri, or Cow-killers' hill. Two of these are situated in the Paranganaud division, viz : Melkotagiri, where the Europeans have settled, and Kilkotagiri, near the Rungaswamy peak ; two are in the Todanaud division, viz : Tiri-chiddy Kotagiri, the site of which was granted to them by the Todas of Ootacamund, and Sholeuru Kotagiri, near Kalhatty ; the Mékunaud and Koon-dé divisions each contain one, and the seventh village lies near Goodaloor, at the foot of the Hills.

The close affinity existing between the language of the Todas and that of the Kotas leads me to believe that both these tribes came from the same quarter, and that they probably settled on the Neilgherries at about the same period. The chief difference between the two dialects lies in this, that the Todas have a deep, guttural, and the Kotas a den-

tal, pronunciation ; they have no difficulty in understanding each other.

The Kotas are the only one of all the hill tribes who practise the industrial arts, and they are therefore essential almost to the very existence of the other classes. They work in gold and silver, are carpenters and blacksmiths, tanners and ropemakers, umbrella-makers, potters, and musicians, and are at the same time cultivators of the soil. They are, however, a squalid race, living chiefly on carrion, and are on this account a bye-word among the other castes, who, while they feel that they cannot do without them, nevertheless abhor them for their filthy habits. All the cattle that die in the villages are carried off by the Kotas, and feasted on by them, in common with the vultures, with whose tastes their own precisely agree ; and at no time do the Kotas thrive so well as when there is a murrain among the herds of the Todas and Badagas. Some years ago the Kotas were anxious to keep buffaloes, but the headmen of the other tribes immediately put their veto upon it, declaring that it was great presumption on the part of such unclean creatures to wish to have anything to do with the holy occupation of milking buffaloes. They then came to me

P

for my opinion, and I informed them that there was nothing to prevent their setting up a dairy, if they were so disposed, but that I could not engage to employ them as my milkmen, unless they materially changed their habits : on further consideration they abandoned the idea altogether. The circumstance shows, however, that a spirit of independence and enterprise prevails among them, and that they are prepared to put their hands to anything that may offer a prospect of bettering their condition, notwithstanding that by so doing they would be subverting the customs and social usages by which their forefathers had from time immemorial been guided.

The Kotas, like the Badagas, have to pay a tribute in grain to the Todas, as lords of the soil ; but as they have no superstitious fear of the feigned enchantments of the Todas, the latter find considerable difficulty in levying their dues, and do not always meet with a very courteous reception, being often taunted with these words : " what ! beggar, have you come again ! "

In each Kotagiri there are two temples, open in front and at the back ; one for their god Siva whom they worship under the name of *Kamataráya*, and the other for his wife, each represented

by a thin silver plate. They have no other deity. Tradition says of Kamataraya that, perspiring profusely, he wiped from his forehead three drops of perspiration, and out of them formed the three most ancient of the hill tribes, viz, the Todas, Kurumbas, and Kotas. The Todas were told to live principally upon milk ; the Kurumbas were permitted to eat the flesh of buffalo calves ; and the Kotas were allowed perfect liberty in the choice of their food, being informed that they might eat carrion if they could get nothing better, and beef also, though this is repulsive to all Hindu notions. It is a revolting and fearful sight to behold a Kota possessed of his god, when they perform the most frantic gestures. I have often thought that, at such times, they might be tempted to make a rush at me and do me some injury ; and with a view to provide against this and other contingencies, have generally armed myself with a Toda club, which also serves me for a walking staff.

The Kotas have two annual festivals ; one in memory of all their relatives who have died during the year previous ; and the other in honor of their idol. They observe nearly the same customs and

ceremonies at their funerals, as the Badagas, except that they have no animal to which they transfer the sins of the deceased. At their general feast, which lasts three or four days, the ashes of their deceased relatives are collected and placed in a heap, and round this they shout and dance almost incessantly, varying the performance by rolling about and burying themselves among the ashes of their friends, and committing acts of the most flagrant debauchery, quite revolting to witness. At the feast in honor of their god, men and women spend the whole of their time in dancing; the former, on these occasions, wear turbans, which they are not generally allowed by their usages to do, and the quantity of jewels they produce is quite astonishing. At this festival the chief men among the Badagas must attend, and be spectators of the gay scene; otherwise their absence would be regarded as a breach of friendship and etiquette, and the Kotas would immediately avenge themselves by refusing to make any ploughs or earthen vessels for the Badagas. Indeed matters have actually come to this state in two localities, and the Badagas, feeling the inconvenience acutely, have desired me to get them some ploughs from the

low country. In one case I have promised to help them, because I was in a measure the cause of the quarrel by dissuading the Badagas from sacrificing a cow to the Kota idol.

The Kotas number about a thousand souls. They do not intermarry with the inhabitants of their own village, but always seek a wife from another Kotagiri. Females are not so scarce among them as among the Todas and Badagas, and there are never, therefore, any quarrels on that account, or complaints of their wives having run away. All their manufactures are of the rudest description, excepting the adz, which is a well proportioned tool, and is generally made of good steel. The hides they cure for the Government tannery at Hoonsoor are of a very fair quality; those which are rejected they make up into ropes for the use of the Badagas.

There are many opium eaters among all the hill tribes, but more perhaps among the Kotas than any of the others. As they cannot afford to buy much of the pure drug, they collect and carry home the skins of the poppies from the Badaga villages, and by boiling them obtain a stupefying decoction which they drink as freely as water. It is often amusing to hear the Badagas, who are the

reverse of being cleanly in their habits, upbraid the Kotas for their want of cleanliness, when quarrelling with them, and boast of their own superiority in this respect ; proving the point by reminding the Kotas that it was on this account they were made palanquin bearers.

The last class among the hill tribes are the IRULAS, who, like the Curumbas, live by cultivation of the soil ; but whose villages are larger and of a better description. They are a timid race inhabiting unhealthy localities in the very heart of the jungles, and rarely having any communication with other natives. Living, as they do, so low down the slopes of the hills, they can scarcely be classed with propriety among the tribes inhabiting the Neilgherries. Their language also is Tamil, while the other four castes speak each a dialect of Canarese. The Irulas are Vishnootes, and act as priests for the Badagas on Rungaswamy peak. They come up now and then to the Badaga villages, and divert the inhabitants with obscene theatrical performances representing passages in the life of Krishna,

whom they call Govinda. The Todas and Badagas stand much in awe of them. Of their customs and usages I know nothing having had little or no communication with them.

THE few interesting particulars which I had noted down respecting the social habits and customs of the hill tribes, have now been brought to a conclusion. Were I asked which of these tribes would probably be the first to embrace Christianity I should find the question a very difficult one to answer. The Lord is able to change the hearts of those who appear to us to be utterly irreclaimable, while his saving grace may be withheld from those who, though in man's view seeking after truth, are perhaps in reality too proud to receive salvation as the free and unmerited gift of God.

Regarding the *Todas* I am as yet not very sanguine, although there are about a dozen of them who listen patiently to my addresses, and put questions to me, which is always a favorable sign, as shewing that they are desirous of receiving instruction. But they are as a body virtually atheists,

leaving all religious concerns to their priests, and never giving themselves the smallest trouble about them. Old and young amuse themselves by twisting twigs and branches into the shape of buffalo-horns ; and buffaloes, and they only, are their gods.

To a *Kurumba* I may preach the plainest truths, for a whole hour, in language which a child might understand, but he stares all the while like a wild animal, and if I ask him a few questions to see if he has comprehended me, his answer will be in the negative, to every thing. Last year I once had fifteen of them together, but much time was lost before I could induce them even to be quiet, and let me speak while they listened, this being a degree of refinement in social intercourse to which they were perfect strangers.

The *Kotas* are somewhat more intellectual than either the *Todas* or *Kurumbas*, but their living on carrion renders them so savage and revolting in their habits, that it is difficult to approach them. When I endeavour to address them they drown my voice with their dreadful music, or compel me to retire by abusing me in the most obscene and offensive language or barking at me in the style of

their own half-wild dogs. Thus I have often had to leave their villages, with a heavy heart at their apparently hopeless condition.

It is among the *Badagas* that we expect to reap the first fruits of our labours, as signs of an awakening from the sleep of spiritual death have occasionally been manifested by them, though not one of them has yet been baptized. In some of the villages there are Badagas who will readily kneel down with me, and offer up a prayer that many a nominal christian could not say, and who, for several years, have discontinued idol worship ; but when I ask them to go one step further, and give proof of their sincerity by openly confessing Christ and receiving baptism, they immediately refer me to another, and say that if he will set the example, they will follow it ; and if I appeal to him, he puts me off with a similar excuse. In one district they invited me to pull down their idol-temple, and erect in its place a house of prayer. I told them that, if they were really in earnest, they ought not to hesitate to do the same themselves ; but I fear they have some worldly object in view, and will take no decided step themselves. However, sometime since, they gave a pleasing proof of their being open to impression by kneeling down

with me in prayer at the door of their own temple, after an exhortation to forsake idolatry, and ending by carrying back to their homes the offerings which they had brought for the idol.

The Badagas are fickle and thoughtless, and cannot keep their attention fixed to any subject for any length of time. I have often travelled on foot with them, and been quite astonished at the frivolous tenor of their conversation, when left to talk among themselves. Money, women, and cultivation are their three principal topics, and to these they constantly return after every interruption.

The missionary's position has greatly changed, since we first began our work among the hill tribes. Our bible stories and conversations used then to be looked upon as intended for their diversion, and long was it before they realized that our object was to induce them to abandon the faith of their forefathers, and receive a purer religion. It has often happened that, after I have narrated to them the history of Christ, or of David, or of Joseph, and entertained the hope that they may have been led to reflect on the insufficiency of their present life and creed to make them happy, they have much to my disappointment turned to each other and said, "the

pádré has performed very successfully"; not in derision, but much as they would express themselves respecting a theatrical piece. Of late years their behaviour towards us has greatly changed, and we have much opposition and contumely of all kinds to endure. I have been told that some parties were so hostile to me that they intended bribing a Kurumba to kill me by sorcery, and that the effect of that process would be that blood would flow from my mouth and nostrils till death ensued! In one place the Badagas created a disturbance, and refused me admittance into their village, which was a great deal for them to do, for they are generally miserable cowards. In another district they refused to sell me any milk, saying that if the pádré were allowed to drink any of their milk, their buffaloes would be destroyed by their offended deities. However, all these things may be considered as favourable symptoms, for they show that the great adversary of souls thinks it worth while to defend his citadel in the hearts of these poor people, and to rouse them up to resist the attack made against it; and I would, assuredly, rather be reviled, than be designated "a three quarter swámy," which the people would at first insist upon calling me.

May the Lord soon grant us to see a rich harvest of redeemed souls from among the hill tribes gathered into Christ's garner, and to Him alone be all the Glory and all the Praise!

