

JOURNAL
OF THE
BOMBAY BRANCH
OF THE
ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY.

JANUARY, 1855.

ART. I.—*The Tithyas or Tirthakas of the Buddhists, and the Gymnosophists of the Greeks, Digambar Jains.* By the Rev. J. STEVENSON, D.D., President.

Read October 20th 1853.

ALTHOUGH much obscurity still rests upon the Buddhist religion, especially in reference to its rise, and the relation it holds to other systems now prevalent in India, light has of late begun to break in upon this interesting subject. The publication of Burnouf's History of Buddhism, embodying large extracts from original documents now existing in Nepal, of which copies were transmitted by Mr. Hodgson to Europe, and the translation of similar documents found in Ceylon by Mr. Hardy, furnish unquestionable proof, that when Buddhism sprung up, five and a half centuries before the Christian era, the whole of Indian society was under the influence of the present Bráhmancial institutions ; and to me it appears as evident that Jainism had begun that opposition to the prevalent ceremonial system, which was afterwards more vigorously carried on under the banners of Buddhism. Slaves as the Hindús at first sight appear to be to priestly domination, there has always been, and still is, a party among them opposed to the

dictation of the Bráhmans, and seeking something more spiritual and liberal than their ritual affords.

It is a singular fact that the first innovations on the ancient ceremonial system are traced back both by Bráhmans and Jains to Rishabha, a sovereign who stands near the top of the list of their heroic kings, and father of that Bharta, from whom India received its indigenous name ; and who, according to the most moderate computation, must have lived four thousand years ago. The account given of him in the Bhágavat, the great Bráhmanical authority, is the following :—

“ After having installed Bharat, the eldest of his hundred sons, in the sovereignty over the earth, this accomplished servant of the Lord, and friend of man, devoted himself to God. Preserving nothing that belonged to him, with his body naked, his hair disordered, and like one deranged, having drank the ashes of the consecrated fire, he went forth as a mendicant in the land of the Bráhmans.” *

The Jain account of Rishabha, in the Kalpa Sútra, is that he was “ the first king, the first mendicant, and the first Tirthankara.” † It is also said that “ Achailakya (want of clothing) is the attribute among the Tirthankaras of Rishabha and Mahavira alone.” ‡

How far any regularly organized and permanent opposition to the ancient ceremonial took place at this early period cannot with certainty be determined. The probability is that ritualism and liberalism were both then, and long after, without system. The next great opponent after Rishabha to the prevalent ceremonialism, as far as we can gather from the tradition of those times, was Kapila ; but although the spirit of his philosophy is in direct contradiction to the Vedas,—the only sacred books that seem to have existed among the Bráhmans in his time,—he never separated himself from their religious community, and his influence was too great to permit of this being effected by others. Modern Hindú writers, however, have denounced his system, in which everything is deduced from nature, without the intervention of a deity, as dangerous, and called it the atheistical Sankhya. This is the scheme of philosophy that was anciently so popular among the Buddhists and Jains ; and the Bráhmans, in order to adapt it to theism, added a deity, to whom they assigned the heartless task of looking on unconcerned while nature was evolving from her fertile womb the elements of things.

* Bhágavat Purána, book v. chap. v. 28.

† Translation of Kalpa Sútra, chap. vii.

‡ Translation of Kalpa Sútra, Introduction, p. 3.

The town of Kapilavasta, named after this sage, was famous in ancient times, and we have no good reason to doubt that Kapila was a historical personage, though the time in which he lived is involved, like most subjects of Hindú chronology, in almost impenetrable obscurity ; yet the place he holds in Indian tradition leads us to conjecture that he flourished above a thousand years before our era.

After Kapila the next liberal philosopher who exerted a great influence on the mind of India was Parshvanáth, the author of the Jain religious system, who flourished eight and a half centuries before the Christian era. According to the Jains, he was the son of a king of Benares, lived a hundred years, and died B. C. 828. He is reckoned twenty-third in the number of their Tirthankaras, has temples specially dedicated to him, and is held, with Rishabha and Mahavíra, still in special veneration. Among the Hindús generally he is much better known as the object of Jain reverence than any of the rest of their sages, and is alone specially invoked in the introduction to the most sacred of Jain works, the Kalpa Sútra ; leading to the idea that he is the real founder of the sect.

After him, the next great teacher of the Jain system was Vardhamána, styled Mahavíra (the great hero), son of Siddhártha, the petty raja of Kundagráma, a town and district in Behár. His death took place B. C. 569, at the age of seventy. His chief disciple at that time was Gotama Indrabhútí, destined to become the famous Buddha, and to spread the religion of human reason and asceticism more widely in Eastern Asia than has happened to any other religious system. Mahavíra had innovated on the system of his predecessors, and to show his entire freedom from human passions, dispensed with the mean apparel which, for the sake of decency, ascetics till then continued to wear. After his death a split took place among the members of the Jain community, the majority adhering with Sudharma to the system of their preceptor, but an influential minority, with Gotama at their head, returning to the institute of Parshvanáth in respect of decent apparel.

Lists of the head teachers of the disciples of Mahavíra, or original Jains, have been handed down to us, of so trustworthy a character, and bearing so much internal evidence of truth, that it is impossible to deny their genuineness, as any one may satisfy himself by looking into the Sthirávali of the Kalpa Sútra ; but owing to the prevalence of Buddhism for several centuries after its rise, Jainism, though not extinct, sank into comparative obscurity.

Gotama, the Jains maintain, was originally a Bráhman, but the

Buddhists affirm that he was the son of Suddhodhana, a petty raja in Behár. However this may be, we cannot allow him the merit or demerit, as the case may be considered, of inventing the system he so widely propagated. The Buddhists themselves mention five other ascetics, no doubt belonging to the Jain minority, who consorted with Gotama before he became Buddha. These, it is true, for a time deserted him, but they all returned on his attaining Buddhahood, and proved exceedingly useful to him in the propagation of his system. The essential elements of both his system and that of the Jains is the philosophy of Kapila—the deification of nature; a spiritu-material pantheism, with the peculiarity that certain natural elements are capable of pressing themselves forward, so as to acquire omniscience. These extraordinary beings are called by the Jains Tirthankaras, and by the others Buddhas.

In thus adopting in the main the Jain account as that based on fact, in opposition to the account of the rise of Buddhism given by its own adherents, I was guided at first solely by the consideration that the Jains give us probable facts, and dates, and terms of human life, back to B. C. 828, while the Buddhists do so only to B. C. 543; but the following considerations, taken from Buddhist documents themselves, will fully confirm the previous existence of the Jains as a religious party.

In the Buddhist documents preserved in the north of India, and analyzed by Burnouf, and in the Ceylonese writings translated by Hardy, frequent mention is made of a class of opponents encountered by Buddha, usually named Tithyas or Tirthakas. This word, however, is used synonymously with Tirthakaras, the Sanskrit form of the word Tirthankara, a name appropriated by the Jains to their deified religious legislators.* In several passages the Tithyas are distinguished both from Bráhmans and Buddhists. Thus Raktaksha is said to have gone to a place where there were Tirthakas, S'rámanas, and Bráhmans, ascetics and mendicants.† Not having the original before me, I can only conjecture that the two last mentioned parties were Vánprasthas, and Sanyásis, and the third common Bráhman householders. The second were certainly Buddhist ascetics; and it seems to me there can be as little doubt but that the first were Jains. In the same way, in the *Lalita Vistara*, the Tirthakas are mentioned among the auditors of Buddha as a sect different from the Bráhmans, in a passage in which, perhaps, the original terms are the same as those of the passage cited

* Burnouf, *Histoire du Buddhism*, vol. i. p. 515, and onward.

† Burnouf, p. 172.

above.* In Turnour's Páli Buddhistical Annals the Tithyas are also mentioned, and named heretics.† In the Buddhist documents the Bráhmans are always correctly described, and well characterized, as in the following passage, where Buddha, after partaking of a feast prepared by a Bráhma for him and his disciples, is said to have spoken as follows :—" As the offering of the Bráhmans cannot be presented without fire, unto him fire is the principle requisite : as a knowledge of the science of recitation is required by him who recites the Vedas ; as the king is the chief of men ; as all rivers are received by the sea ; as the sun and moon are necessary to the science of the astronomer, so to him who would acquire merit by the giving of alms Buddha and his priests are the principal requisites." ‡

Again, Buddha and his priests on a certain occasion are said to have fallen in with a certain ascetic Bráhma called Bawari, who taught " the three Vedas," but neither he nor any other Bráhma is ever called a Tirthaka. The authors of those books, then, knew full well what a Bráhma was, and describe him as we now find him. Let us next see how they describe the Tirthakas.

One of the principal Tirthaka opponents of Buddha is thus censured by a favourer of Buddhism :—" Comment peut-il être sage celui qui, portant les signes de la virilité, &c. promène nu dans le village, aux yeux du peuple ? Celui qui suit la loi couvre le devant de son corps d'un vêtement."§

In Harvey's Manual of Buddhism we are told that this Purána was called also " Purná-Kasyapa-Buddha, because he had overcome all evil desire."

Further, it is said—" The people brought him clothes in abundance, but he refused them, as he thought if he put them on he would not be treated with the same respect. ' Clothes,' said he, ' are for the covering of shame ; shame is the effect of sin ; I am a *rahat*, and as I am free from evil desire, I know no shame.' The people believed what he said, and worshipped him. Five hundred other persons became his disciples, and it was proclaimed throughout all Jambudvipa that he was Buddha."||

It is noticed particularly of another Tirthaka opponent of Buddha,

* Lalita Vistara, Cal. edn. p. 2, l. 3 from the bottom. The words are as follows :—
अन्वतीर्थिकं अन्नं ब्राह्मणं चरकं परिहाजकारि। Jains, Buddhists, Bráhmans,
cremities, and mendicants from other quarters.

† Jour. As. Soc. Bengal, vols. vi. and vii.

§ Burnouf, pp. 187, 188.

‡ Burnouf, p. 275.

|| Harvey, p. 201.

that he wore no clothes.* A third boiled all his water ere he drank it, and a fourth condemned the eating of flesh.†

There are two grand characteristics, then, of those Tirthakas, which are in exact agreement with the oldest books and traditions of the Jains—the existence among them of Digambar sages, and the total abstinence from animal food. Neither of these are applicable to either the Bráhmans or Buddhists of ancient times.

In all the Bráhmanical works no follower of the religion of the Vedas is mentioned, with the single exception of Rishabha, who went about unclothed. Against following his example the Bhágavat puts in an express caution, and says that those who now do so “are infatuated by necessity, under the evil influence of the Kali age.”‡

The Vishnu Purána, when it describes Vishnu as assuming the form of a sage to deceive mankind, describes him as a Digambar Jain, in the semblance of a naked mendicant, with his head shaven, and carrying a bunch of peacocks’ feathers.§

The Jains are evidently intended in this passage, though it is usual to say that the ignorance of the Hindú annalist has led him to confound them with the Buddhists.

In Manu the ascetics of the third or Vánprastha division of Bráhmans are directed to clothe themselves with the “skin of an antelope or the bark of a tree,” and the Sanyási or fourth order are also directed to be dressed in “coarse clothing.”||

Hodgson, indeed, mentions that there is an isoteric or tantrical theory of Buddhism known in Nepal, the pictures representing the sages of which make them appear as entirely unclothed; but no such sages are acknowledged among the pure Buddhists of the present day; and the adoption of such a usage is entirely in opposition to the practice and precepts of Buddha, as contained in the documents transmitted to M. Burnouf by Mr. Hodgson himself, which expressly condemn the Tirthakas for this very practice.

In reference to abstinence from animal food, this seems to have been an original institute of the Jains, or at least early introduced by them. Buddha would not kill an animal, it is true, for food, but he would eat its flesh, and the last meal he partook of was a dish of pork, prepared by a disciple named Chundo.¶ According to Manu, the feast in honour

* Harvey, p. 330. † Harvey, p. 292. ‡ Bhagavat, books v. and vi. 2.

§ Vishnu Purána, books iii. and xviii. || Manu, book vi. 6, 44.

¶ Turnour. Jour. As. Soc. Bengal, vol. vii. p. 1003. This fact is also noticed in Burnouf and Harvey.

of deceased ancestors could not be honourably celebrated without a number of kinds of flesh, and the fatted calf was killed to entertain a distinguished guest among the ancient Bráhmans as well as among the Jews.*

The Tirthakas of the Buddhists, then, could be none but Digambar Jains ; and the very same considerations show that the Gymnosophists of the Greeks must have belonged to the same class. They could neither have been Bráhmans nor Buddhists, but such sages as are described in the Kalpa Súra and other Jain works, successors of whom are still met with on Mount A'bú, and the districts adjoining. Clement of Alexandria, the most accurate Greek writer on foreign matters, expressly distinguishes the Σεμνοί or Buddhists from the Γυμνοσοφισταί or naked sages, and though other writers confound them, that will not excite much surprise in the mind of any one who knows what crude notions on many Indian subjects, after so long and close an intercourse, still prevail in England.

The only persons at all within the pale of Hinduism who adopt the practice of going about naked are a sect of Kapláika Gosains, extreme votaries of Siva, who are considered as schismatics by the Bráhmans, and who are confined to the east and south of India, and unknown in the west, where the Greeks came in contact with the Hindus. Their origin, too, cannot be traced back by either tradition or ancient documentary evidence to the times of the Greek intercourse with Western India, while that of the Jains can, by traditions and writings as worthy of credit as any that exist in the country.

As, then, both Bráhmans and Buddhists, not only by their present practice, but in all their extant writings, condemn the practice of sages going about unclothed, as there is not the least evidence of any such usage having ever prevailed among either the one party or the other ; as the Jains have in their sacred books laid down the want of clothing as the characteristic of their first and last deified religious legislators, and as a sect of Digambaras has continued to exist among them from of old to the present day, the only conclusion that is left to us is, that the Gymnosophists whom the Greeks found in Western India, where Digambarism at present prevails, were Jains, and neither Bráhmans nor Buddhists ; and that it was a company of Digambaras of this sect that Alexander fell in with near Taxiles, one of whom, Calanas, followed him to Persia.

* Manu, book iii. 168—172 ; v. 22, 41.

ART. II.—*Buddhist Antiquities in China.* By the Rev. J. STEVENSON, D.D., President.

Presented September 15th 1853.

IN Fortune's *Tea Districts of China and India* there is an account of a curious Buddhist Inscription (plate vi.) in an island near Chusan, of which, not having yet seen any explanation, I beg to submit a translation, with remarks, to the Society.

The passage in question is as follows :—“ After staying a few days at Chusan, I went onward to another of the islands, named Poo-too. This is commonly called by foreigners the ‘ Worshipping Island,’ and is inhabited by the priests of Buddha, and their followers. I had two objects in visiting it at this time : the first was on account of my health, which was getting affected by the excessive heat of the weather ; and the second was to obtain a copy of some inscriptions which I had observed on a former occasion. When I landed, I walked over the hill in the direction of one of the principal temples, which had been built in a little valley or glen between the hills on the road-side. By the way, I came to the stones on which the inscriptions had been carved. There were two of them : they looked like little grave stones, and, as usual in such cases, each had a small place near its base for burning incense.

“ The characters upon them were not Chinese, and no Chinaman could read them. I applied to some of the most *learned* priests in Poo-too, but without success. They could neither read them, nor could they give me the slightest information as to how they came to be placed there.

“ The characters looked like those of some of the Northern Indian languages ; one of the stones was evidently less aged than the other. In this the unknown character was placed along the top, and a row of Chinese ones below. The latter, when read, appeared to be nothing more than an unmeaning phrase, used by the Buddhist priests at the commencement of their worship—*Nae Mo o me to ga* : what the upper line means some oriental scholar may possibly be able to say.

“The second stone was evidently very ancient. There were no Chinese characters upon this. How or when these stones were placed there, it is difficult even to form a conjecture. Buddhism we know was imported from India to China, and it is just possible that under these old stones may be the remains of some of its earliest teachers.”

To any one acquainted with the Tibetan alphabet, it is easy at once to pronounce the foreign character in these inscriptions to be the Tibetan. In Devanagari and Roman letters the second and principal of them may be read as follows :—

ॐ	ॐ	Blam.
ॐ । अरकचन । ह्रीः	ॐ । मणिपद्मे । ह्रीं	Om.—Arakachana Hríḷ.
ॐ । वज्र-पाणि । ह्रूं	ॐ । वज्र-पाणि । ह्रूं	Om.—Manipadme Hám.
ॐ । वज्र-पाणि । ह्रूं	ॐ । वज्र-पाणि । ह्रूं	Om.—Vajrapani Hunḷ.

The first inscription is nothing more than the second line of this, with a Chinese gloss below.

The general character of these inscriptions, too, is sufficiently obvious: they are Buddhist formulæ, held in great reverence by the people, especially in Tibet, where the second of them is written frequently on temples and other public buildings, and held in something of the same esteem as the Bráhmans hold their Gayatri, with this difference, that instead of seeking to conceal it, they, in accordance with the general spirit of their religion, seek to publish it. The Nepálese, however, think this wrong, and in this, as in many other things, have taken their ideas from the Bráhmans.

This formula has exercised the ingenuity and learning of Klaproth, Hodgson, and Mill; and were it not that the accompanying formulæ, as I think, throw additional light on it and the whole subject, I might be spared any remarks upon it.

The whole of the formulæ then, I think, belong originally to the Hindú Tantra, though they are capable also of receiving an orthodox Hindú, a mystical, and a popular Buddhist interpretation.

In a Tantrika tract, the नवार्णवास (*Navárnyása*), which I have now before me, I find ह्रीं very frequently used, and among other symbols also ह्रीं and ह्रूं. I asked a Bráhman to write down the Hindú symbol corresponding to those in our inscription, and he gave me ह्रीं, ह्रीं and ह्रूं: The correspondence of these with those in our inscriptions is striking, and plainly points to the source whence these sacred symbols of the Buddhists was originally derived. In the last of the Tibetan

formulae it will be observed that the nasal mark is combined with the visarg, a combination that neither in the ancient Vedic nor modern Puranic Sanscrit can occur. It is a peculiarity of the Tantrika mantras. That this is no casual reading will appear from Klaproth's fac-similes, three of which are the same as ours, though he gives no explanation of the visarg, but assumes the word to be the Sanscrit वृत्, meaning *verily, amen*.

The original sense, then, of these Tantrika symbols at the end of each of the lines, would be expressed according to the left-handed scheme by सदानन्द्य, सैषून, मणि; in the right-handed system by Sakti, Ganesa, and Siva; according to mystical Buddhism by Adi Pradnyá, Sanga, and Buddha; or the Isis, Horus, and Osiris of the ancient Egyptians, which we might interpret Nature, the World, and God, with some accommodation of the terms to our modes of thinking, as those acquainted with Hindúism will easily perceive. All these Tantrika symbols are to be considered as nouns in the vocative, or interjections, having no variation on account of case.

It is only necessary to notice in passing, that the initial ओ is the popular Hindú symbol for Bráhma, Vishnu, and Siva; the Buddhist for Buddha, Dharma, and Sanga; and the philosophic for the eternal unmanifested essence of deity, from which all else is supposed to have sprung, and which they denominate Omkára or Bráhma.

In explaining the words in the body of each of these formulae, we commence with the middle one, as it is by far the most common and important, and the one that is repeated on a separate stone with the Chinese below it.

It is Manipadme, "Oh jewel and lotus!" words which, again, every party may explain according to his own peculiar system. The term is, I conceive, a compound, and in the vocative case, and probably in the dual number, though this is not quite essential; but the last member must be considered feminine. From the original Tantra, again, we easily get the explanation of Siva and Sakti in India, given by Klaproth, and by parity of reasoning, Vishnu and Lákshmi, and Adi Buddha, and Adi Pradnyá; and not improbably, in the mystical system, the compounding of the two words may be taken to signify Sanga, which means union. According to Hodgson and Klaproth, in the popular Buddhist system of Nepál and Tibet, this formula is applied to the Boddhi-satwa Padma Pañi, who is supposed at present to preside over and regulate the affairs of the world. It is this that probably has given rise to the common but incorrect reading मणिपद्म, since Padma Pañi is looked on as a male, and not as a female. To consider मणिपद्म