

*On the Manners, Religion, and Laws of the Cûcis, or mountaineers of Tipra.—Communicated in Persian to the Literary Society in Bengal, by John Rawlins, Esqr.*

THE inhabitants of the mountainous districts to the east of Bengal give the name of *Pâtiyân* to the Being, who created the Universe; but they believe, that a Deity exists in every Tree, that the Sun and Moon are Gods, and that, whenever they worship those subordinate divinities, *Pâtiyân* is pleased.

If any one among them put another to death the Chief of the Tribe, or other persons, who bear no relation to the deceased, have no concern in punishing the murderer; but, if the murdered person have a brother, or other heir, he may take blood for blood; nor has any man whatever a right to prevent or oppose such retaliation.

When a man is detected in the commission of theft or other atrocious offence, the chieftain causes a recompense to be given to the complainant, and reconciles both parties; but the Chief himself receives a customary fine; and each party gives a feast of pork, or other meat, to the people of his respective tribe.

In ancient times it was not a custom among them to cut off the heads of the women, whom they found in the habitations of their enemies; but it happened once, that a woman asked another, why she came so late to her business of sowing grain: she answered, that her husband was gone to battle, and the necessity of preparing food and other things for him had occasioned her delay. This answer was overheard by a man at enmity with her husband; and he was filled with resentment against her, considering, that, as she had prepared food for her husband for the purpose of sending him to battle against his tribe, so in general, if women were not to remain at home, their husbands could not be supplied with provision, and consequently could not make war with advantage. From that time it became a constant practice, to cut off the heads of the enemy's women; especially, if they happen to be pregnant, and therefore confined to their houses; and this barbarity is carried so far, that, if a *Cûci* assail the house of an enemy, and kill a woman with child, so that he may bring two heads, he acquires honour and celebrity in his tribe, as the destroyer of two foes at once.

As to the marriages of this wild nation; when a rich man has made a contract of marriage, he gives four or five head of *gayâls* (the cattle of the mountains) to the father and mother of the bride, whom he carries to his own house: her parents then kill the *gayâls*, and, having prepared fermented liquors and boiled rice with other eatables, invite the father, mother, brethren, and kindred of the bridegroom to a nuptial entertainment. When a man of small property is inclined to marry, and a mutual agreement is made, a similar method is followed in a lower degree; and a man may marry any woman, except his own mother. If a married couple live cordially together, and have a son, the wife is fixed and irremovable; but, if they have no son, and especially if they live together on bad terms, the husband may divorce his wife, and marry another woman.

They have no idea of heaven or hell, the reward of good, or the punishment of bad actions; but they profess a belief, that, when a person dies, a certain spirit comes and seizes his soul, which he carries away; and that, whatever