

worshipped, with great ado, for a whole week, by the family. Music and feasts in honour of it are made; and offerings of food are kept beside it in the night, and believed to be actually eaten up by it.

After the week is over, each family carries its own; gay processions are made along the streets, and the idol is sunk in the sea, or in rivers or in ponds. In Bombay they are sunk in the sea. The richer classes carry them in palanquins, and their little children are placed in the same, facing this ugly image; and bands of music in front are playing some of our merry English and Scotch airs, and "God save the Queen," "Home, sweet Home," &c. I have seen these poor little children sit with such care, and with fear on their faces, staring at the idol which they are so early taught to look up to as their god.

Most laughable and ridiculous stories exist about this god, which are told with great delight, awe, and reverence. Ganesh or Ganpati is the name of the god. His mother's name is Parvati. Parvati's husband, Shiva, one day in a rage, cut off the head of Ganpati, at which Parvati got into a great rage. Shiva then, to console his wife, clapt on the head of a giant which he had lately killed, on the headless body of Ganpati. This giant's head was like an elephant's and so he appears a man's body with an elephant's head.

Ganpati's charger is a rat. One day when riding about, the rat gave way under him, as is likely. Poor Ganpati then not only fell off, but rolled away some distance, as he was very round and plump. At this sight the moon laughed. Ganpati got very angry with the moon, and swore that no man should see her face again. The other gods, however, begged of him not to carry out his curse, as the earth could not do without the moon. He then consented to limit the curse to one day, on which day no Hindu should look on the moon. This day is the fourth of the month in which Ganpati is worshipped. And actually a hundred millions of men keep from seeing the moon on that day, or at any rate profess to do so. They believe that a great calamity will come on them or their families, were they to see her. Should any one accidentally have looked on the moon, there are some Sanscrit lines which he must repeat as a charm to keep away the evil that would have otherwise come upon him. Another way of charming the evil away is by getting people to abuse you, and so men go about smashing windows or doing other mischief to their neighbours, in order to be abused by them, and thus charm away the evil.