

HINDOO TEMPLE

rites and ceremonies by which the idol is honored.

Complex Institution Over Which the High Caste Brahmans Exercise Supreme Authority as Receivers, Trustees and Ministers—Their Methods.

The Hindoo temple of any size or pretensions is a complex institution. It is a group of buildings inclosed within one or more walls. It possesses certain privileges, granted by native rulers in days gone by and still respected by the present government. It enjoys what may almost be termed a royal revenue from houses, lands and offerings, and it possesses boards of treasure in jewels, gold and silver vessels and coins. The property is in the hands of trustees, who are elected or who claim an hereditary right to the office.

These have power over an enormous wealth. Under unscrupulous trustees valuable jewels have disappeared or been replaced with glass. Pots of silver and gold coin have been refilled with copper. Rich lands have been let at a nominal rent to their relatives, and offerings intended for the temple have been appropriated personally. Occasionally a trustee is prosecuted for his dishonest practices, but it is not often that he is punished.

The erection of the Hindoo temple is the work of a slow system of evolution. Some holy man perhaps dies on the spot, or he has an ecstatic vision of the god in one of the incarnations. The space is invested with sanctity and an image set up to the deity. The landowner straightway builds a small shelter over it to propitiate the god in his favor. The ground around the edifice is next inclosed with a fence.

By and by the shed is removed and something more pretentious and lasting erected. The dewan, or prime minister of the province, makes a pilgrimage to the shrine and leaves a rich offering in the hands of the Brahmans, who have instituted themselves as receivers, trustees and ministers. More pilgrims come; offerings in kind as well as in jewels and money pour in, and new buildings are erected. Courts, halls, galleries, a tank, pillared platforms, walls, gateways and towers slowly grow around the shrine—the center point of the edifice. Other shrines of affiliated deities may group themselves near the original, but the mulasthanum is always the same.

It holds the image of the deity to whom the temple is dedicated, and it is the scene of daily ceremonies. At all risks it must be jealously guarded against the intrusion of any but the twice born. When Clive took the temple of Sriengbam—the largest in southern India, and a powerful stronghold in those days—2,000 fierce Rajputs stood before the door of the Mulasthanum, declaring that the Europeans should only pass in over their dead bodies. Their superstitions were respected, and Clive left the fanatics in possession.

In preserving the integrity of the sacred shrine the Hindoo has something more to consider than his religious scruples. The restitution of the divine or mantric essence is a very expensive and intricate process, requiring large sums of money for its different rites. At Velore there is a handsome temple which was desecrated years ago by the Mohammedans. They killed a cow in the Mulasthanum. The building now stands empty and unoccupied and the European may go into outer and inner court as he pleases. The Mulasthanum is a small hall, richly decorated with carvings. It contains nothing but a stone dais, on the face of which is a tortoise in outline.

The image rested formerly on the tortoise. There is a small gutter around the platform, which conducted the sacred water—used for the ablutions of the idol—into a reservoir outside. Pilgrims drank of this water eagerly in belief of its miraculous powers of healing and purification. The temple would probably be used again by Hindoo worshippers if money were forthcoming sufficient to restore the divine essence.

The idol is not usually made of wood or stone. It is molded in an amalgam of five metals—gold, silver, brass, copper and lead. In size it is smaller than the human figure. It is not called a "Swami" until the mantric essence has been infused into it by the proper ceremonies. These are performed by the Brahmans, who claim the power of placing the essence in any object, animate or inanimate that they choose. Sometimes the object is a man, the chief trustee or "Moktesoor." He is then said to be divine, and is called "Swami," and moreover, is worshiped as a god. The daily ritual which concerns only the idol, takes place inside the shrine at intervals during the day. No worshippers are present except those who are taking part in the function. The image is tended in every minute particular as though it were a living human being. Nothing is omitted. It is washed with water from the sacred tank. It is dressed and fed. It is supposed to take pleasure in the company of the dancing girls; it sleeps and wakes, and finally is put to bed. During its toilet hymns of praise are sung, lamps are lighted, camphor and incense burned, and the tantom is frequently introduced. Part of the revenues of the temple pays for all of this, and a great many Brahmans find their occupation and their living in it.

The ritual of the festival is much more imposing. The image is covered with plates of gold and loaded with jewels. It is carried in procession upon a huge car, surmounted with a throne of silver. It may now appear before the eyes of all, and it makes a slow and magnificent journey around the outer courts of the temple—which are open to all casts—and through the town. Offerings in kind and in money and jewels are received. The dancing girls are in their green, their charms enhanced by rich jewelry and gold; they are the daughters and wives of the god, and the children of the devil. The value of their charms goes to swell the offertory considerably. Chamber Journal.

The Rev. George ... killed on Tuesday last, in the brush opposite the college at Lake City, a rattlesnake having sixteen rattles and a button and measuring 5 1/2 feet.

Mr. Van Pelt, editor of the Craig, Mo., Meteor, went to a drug store at Hillsdale, Iowa, and asked the physician in attendance to give him a dose of something for cholera morbus and looseness of the bowels. He says: "I felt so much better the next morning that I concluded to call on the physician and get him to fix me up a supply of the medicine. I was surprised when he handed me a bottle of Chamberlain's Colic, Cholera and Diarrhoea Remedy. He said he prescribed it regularly in his practice and found it the best he could get or prepare. I can testify to efficiency in my case at all events." For sale by M. Lively Druggist.

De Witt's Sarsaparilla cleanses the blood increases the appetite and tones up the system. It has benefited many people who have suffered from blood disorders. It will help you. Sold by M. Lively.

Miles Wilson, in jail at Gainesville, under sentence to be hanged, and who escaped on Wednesday of last week, returned on Sunday and was at the jail when the jailer went down in the morning. He said that he came out so he could go and see his folks before he left them forever.

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Tuesday, July 12, at 3 p. m.	SEMINOLE	Sunday, July 17, at 10:30 a. m.
Friday, July 15, at 3 p. m.	IROQUOIS	Thursday, July 21, at 8:30 p. m.
Tuesday, July 19, at 3 p. m.	ALGONQUIN	Sunday, July 24, at 4:30 a. m.
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