INTRODUCTION

MAY you be purified by Parvati [1] who coloured the nails of her hands, which were white like the waters of Ganges, with lac after seeing the fire on the forehead of Shambhu; who painted her eyes with collyrium after seeing the dark hues of Shambhu's neck and whose body-hair stood erect (with desire) after seeing in a mirror the ashes on Shambhu's body.

I invoke thee, O Kamadeva! thee the sportive; thee, the wanton one, who dwellest in the hearts of all created beings;

Thou instillest courage in time of war; thou destroyedst Sambar' A'sura and the Rakshasas; thou sufficest unto Rati [2], and to the loves and pleasures of the world;

Thou art ever cheerful, removing uneasiness and overactivity, and thou givest comfort and happiness to the mind of man.

King Ahmad was the ornament of the Lodi House. He was a Sea, having for waters the tears shed by the widows of his slaughtered foes, and he rose to just renown and wide-spread fame. May his son Lada Khan, versed in the Kama Shastra, or Scripture of Love, and having his feet rubbed with the diadems of other kings, be ever victorious!

The great princely sage and arch-poet, Kalyana Malla versed in all the arts, after consulting many wise and holy men, and having examined the opinions of many poets, and extracted the essence of their wisdom, composed, with a view of pleasing his sovereign, a work which was called Ananga Ranga [3]. May it ever be appreciated by the discerning, for it hath been dedicated to those who are desirous of studying the art and mystery of man's highest enjoyment, and to those who are best acquainted with the science and practice of dalliance and love-delight.

It is true that no joy in the world of mortals can compare with that derived from the knowledge of the Creator. Second, however, and subordinate only to this, are the satisfaction and pleasure arising from the possession of a beautiful woman. Men, it is true, marry for the sake of undisturbed congress, as well as for love and comfort, and often they obtain handsome and attractive wives. But they do not give them plenary contentment, nor do they themselves thoroughly enjoy their charms. The reason of which is, that they are purely ignorant of the Scripture of Cupid, the Kama Shastra; and, despising the difference between the several kinds of women, they regard them only in an animal point of view. Such men must be looked upon as foolish and unintelligent; and this book is composed with the object of preventing lives and loves being wasted in similar manner, and the benefits to be derived from its study are set forth in the

following verses:--

"The man who knoweth the Art of Love, and who understandeth the thorough and varied enjoyment of woman;

"As advancing age cooleth his passions, he learneth to think of his Creator, to study religious subjects, and to acquire divine knowledge:

"Hence he is freed from further transmigration of souls; and when the tale of his days is duly told, he goeth direct with his wife to the Svarga (heaven)."

And thus all you who read this book shall know how delicious an instrument is woman, when artfully played upon; how capable she is of producing the most exquisite harmony; of executing the most complicated variations and of giving the divinest pleasures.

Finally, let it be understood that every Shloka (stanza) of this work has a double signification, after the fashion of the Vedanta, and may be interpreted in two ways, either mystical or amatory.

Footnotes

1 The mountain-goddess of many names, wife of Shiva, the third person of the Hindu Trinity, who is here termed Shambhu for Swayambhu, the Self-Existent. The invocation is abrupt and does not begin with the beginning, Ganesha (Janus), Lord of Incepts, who is invariably invoked by the Hindu, that he may further the new undertaking. This god is worshipped under the form of a short stout man, with an elephant's trunk and protuberant belly. (See Vol. III, P. 38, "A View of the History, Literature, and Mythology of the Hindus," by William Ward, of Serampore, London, 1832.) The loves of Krishna and the sixteen thousand milkmaids are recorded in the Bhagavat; this eleventh incarnation of Vishnu is a dark-blue man, playing with both hands upon the pipe, whilst Radha, his wife, stands his left side. Kamadeva, or the Hindu Cupid, the son of Bramha, is represented as a beautiful youth, the most lovely of all the gods, holding a bow and flower-tipped arrow, with which, while wandering through perfumed glades, accompanied by Rati, his spouse, he wounds the hearts of the inhabitants of the Triloka or Three Worlds. Sir William Jones says that he appears to correspond with the Greek Eros and the Roman Cupido, but that the Indian description of his person and arms, his family, attendants and attributes has new and peculiar beauties. Sambar' A'sura was one of the Rakshasas, gigantic and diabolical beings, whom Kama slew.

2 The Sakit, or female principle, representing the aptitude of conception and continuation, becomes the wives of the gods in Hindu mythology. Thus in the Shavya-Purana, Shiva says, "from the supreme spirit proceed Parusha" (the generative or male principle), "and Parkriti" (the productive, or female principle), "and by them was produced the universe, the manifestation of the one god." For its origin we must go back to the Chaldaeo-Babylonian System.

3 This title has been explained: see also Ward III. 179. Kama was the son of Maya (= Illusion, the attracting powers of Matter, Maia the mother of Mercury), he married Rati (Affection, vulgarised in our "rut") and is bosom-friend to Vasanta, Basant or Spring.