RELATION OF RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND PRACTICES
TO
SOCIAL CHANGE IN AN INDIAN VILLAGE

by

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INTRODUCTION

In discussing the relation of religious beliefs and practices to social change in the Indian village we are dealing with a subject which is peculiarly Indian. Religion is interwoven with the life history of the Indian people to an extent true of no other country or people. India is popularly known as the most religious country in the world. She still exists as a land of villages. The number of Indian villages has been vividly pictured by a well known missionary Bishop when he said that if Christ had gone to India on the first Easter morning instead of going to Heaven and had visited a village in India every day since the first Easter until today he would still have about thirty thousand villages yet to visit.

In the words of Sir John Strachey, "the first essential thing to learn about India is that there is no such country". "India is not a country like England or France but rather a continent like Europe, a continent of vast variety and contrast. Her stately mountains towering up to Mount Everest, the highest peak in the world, with its ten thousand feet of virgin snow, stand out in vivid contrast to her tremendous ravines some of which are capable of swallowing the Alps and the whole of Switzerland in such a fashion that they would not be even observable from the lower levels. Her dry sweeping plains where only two inches of rain fall in a year contrast with her Assam Hills which boast of the highest rainfall in the world." Her thousands of villages stand in decided contrast to the great cities of Calcutta and Bombay which rank as the second and third largest cities in the British Empire. Her wonderful palaces and temples serve as a background for some of the filthiest hovels that have ever lodged human kind.

"See Indian Year Book for 1924, P. 125.  
"Men drink once a day and cattle every second day. Washing is an impossible luxury"."
Her land is inhabited by three hundred and twenty millions, not of people but of peoples, ninety per cent. of whom are dependent on agriculture for a livelihood. They speak one hundred and forty seven different languages, practice nine great religions, worship thirty two million gods and three hundred and thirty million godlets, observe thousands of caste divisions and comply with the rules and regulations of seven hundred and fifty feudatory rulers and their respective governments as well as respecting the British Raj. Within her borders Mongols, Aryans, Persians, Greeks, Scythians, Huns, Arabs, Afghans, Turks, and Moguls have all passed the round of valour, greatness, discord, degeneracy and decay and have bequeathed to modern India what Lord Ronaldshay (recent Governor of Bengal and president of the Royal Geographical Society) calls "An ethnologic pageant epitomizing the gradual growth of civilization through centuries of time. At one end of the scale are men of the finest culture who have reached lofty heights in the realm of speculative thought; at the other, men who religiously have not outgrown the stage of the crudest superstition. At this end the bow and arrow represent the highest achievement in the realm of mechanical invention, at the other we have as Professor Geddes describes it "the Indian scientist contriving and constructing apparatus of such exquisite refinement as to excite the astonished admiration of the scientists of the West."

Her various native states occupy about one third of India and contain seventy seven millions of people. These states vary greatly in size, in resources, in civilization, in the character of the people and their chiefs, and in the amount of independence they enjoy. There are literally clusters of tiny states in the Bombay presidency many of which individually consist of only one or two villages. In such States politics are of a primitive type. For instance, a story was current at Simla to the effect that the superintendent
of the Hill States was one day waited upon by the peasant headman of one of these States, who producing a key, explained that they had deposed their Raja and locked him in his bedroom, and had come to seek advice as to the next stage in a properly conducted revolution. On the other hand there are large States like Hyderabad and Kashmir each of which is nearly as large as the mainland of Italy. In his "British Dominions in India" Sir Alfred Lyall explains that "the present form and constitution of the British Empire in India with its vast provinces and numerous feudatories represents historically the gradual incorporation under one dominion of States that have submitted and States that have been forcibly subdued. Broadly speaking the states that were subdued are now included in British India and the States that submitted are now the native states of India. (1)

It will therefore be necessary, in view of the vastness and variety of the field, for the sake of definiteness, to limit our investigation by designating the village life meant and the religious beliefs and practices involved. For this reason a representative village of the Deccan is taken as the basis of our investigation, though of course many of the observations and conclusions would be equally true in other sections of Hindustan.

The writer spent over five happy years among the people in Southern India and is here trying to state fairly and objectively conditions as he came in contact with them, yet all the time conscious of the danger of portraying a Western bias. None of us can entirely free himself from his own inheritance, training and environment when he tries to picture other peoples, especially is this true when we come to matters of morals and ethical ideals.

When Mr. H. G. Wells, the famous English writer, was sent over by an English newspaper to report the disarmament conference in 1921, he wrote out

(1) Holderness, Sir T. W. "Peoples and Problems of India"
the following statement of his bias for the benefit of his readers:

"For my own part, though I care very little for the British Empire, which I think a temporary patched up thing, I have passionate pride in being of the breed that produced such men as Shakespeare, Milton, Bacon, Cromwell, Newton, Washington, Darwin, Nelson and Lincoln. I love the peculiar humour and kindly temper of an English crowd and the soft beauty of an English Country side with a strong possessive passion. I find it hard to think that other peoples matter quite as much as the English. I want to serve the English and to justify the English. Intellectually I know better, but no man's intelligence is continually dominant; fatigue or surprise him, the habits and emotions take control. I have this bias which will always make me run crooked in favour of my own people." (1)

Man's consciousness of the highest social values varies with his own experience, his inheritance and cultural background. No attempt is made here to contrast oriental with occidental culture but simply to show conditions as they may be found in the majority of South Indian Villages and show, as far as possible, the relation of religious beliefs and practices to these conditions.

(1) Atkins and Laswell--"Labour Attitudes and Problems".
The word Deccan literally means 'country to the south'. A line drawn on the map horizontally from Calcutta to Karachi would cut off this Southern triangle from the extra peninsular or continental part of India. The Deccan is geologically distinct from the Indo-Gangetic plain and the Himalayas. "It is", says Sir T. W. Holderness, "the remains of a former continent which stretched continuously to Africa in the space now occupied by the Indian Ocean. The rocks of which it is formed are among the oldest in the world and show no traces of ever having been submerged. In many parts they are covered by a sheet of black trap rock or basalt, which once flowed over them as molten lava". In the Deccan we are therefore in the first days of the world. We see land substantially as it existed before the beginnings of life. It is bounded on the North by the Vindhyas Hills and it's topography is altogether different from north India. As a whole it is a broken and rocky country which has lent itself to the establishment of separate states and affording protection to the weak against the strong. The mass of the people show little trace of Aryan blood and speak a non-Aryan language called Dravidian. The Deccan remains to this day the most Hindu section of India and its people are now the purest examples of the original stock. They are short dark men, with long black hair tending to curl, and with very broad noses depressed at the root. They still have many customs similar to those described in the Vedic Poems one thousand years before the Christian era. For example, when the census collector in a certain village became irate because the houses had not been properly numbered, the headman brought out the drums and showed the number of the house on each drum. But upon finding a dilapidated house with a number the

*Holderness, Sir T. W. "Peoples and Problems of India."
census man inquired why an empty house should be numbered and received the reply that it was inhabited by a ghost.

Our discussion has to do with the village, an institution which has persisted in its original form longer in India than anywhere else in the world. It takes us back to the days when the unit of society was the enlarged family under the rule of the nearest direct descendant in the male line of a reputed common ancestor. The economic independence and self-sufficing organization of the Indian village have undoubtedly resulted from its isolation in the past, which isolation was in turn probably due to poor and unsafe communications. Under native governments there were no highroads for wheeled traffic and no means of marketing bulky and perishable commodities. Travelling was unsafe and there was no police control, so war and brigandage would be the normal condition of the country. Each village was required to stand alone and supply its own staff of servants, labourers and artisans. In England a three days strike results in industrial paralysis but in India all the railroads might stop for a month without disturbing the even tenor of the life of many of the villages of the southland.

Religiously speaking, Hinduism has the right of way in Southern India. It is the most purely Hindu section of the world. But even there we shall soon discover that Hinduism, on its philosophic and speculative side, has little appeal to the simple village folk. In fact there are only one or two temples in all India erected to Brahma, the creator, the indestructible IT. So for ordinary working purposes, in dealing with village life, we find ourselves further confined in our discussion to what is generally known as Popular Hinduism which after all is, in actual practice, generally accepted by the vast majority of Hindu people.
We shall now proceed to examine how the religious beliefs and practices, found in Popular Hinduism, affect the social organization and culture of the Dravidians in a Deccan village.

"Of a man or of a nation", says Carlyle, "we inquire first of all what religion they have?" Answering this question is giving us the soul of the history of the man or of the nation..."Without an exception, the character of every nation and tribe of the human family has been formed and modified in a degree by the character attributed to their gods". As a rule religion and civilization harmonize, and India seems to be no exception to this general rule. Hindu gods resemble Hindu kings. Just as there has never been, under Hindu rule, any one universally accepted political authority, so also there has never been under Hindu religion any universal conception of a paramount power like the commanding personality of Christianity. In fact there seems to be little agreement even among Hindus as to what elements are essential to the constitution of Hinduism.

Only a few years ago twenty five recognized leaders in Hinduism were asked for an answer to the question, what is Hinduism? Only seven of the answers had any agreement, and their reply was as follows: "It is enough if you are born of Hindu parents, and have not been converted to another faith" and one of the seven illuminatingly adds, "there are no essentials in Hinduism either of belief or practice". Lord Ronaldshay cites a well known Hindu who has defined the term as applicable to all inhabitants of India who are not Muhammadans, Christians, Parsis, Sikhs, Jains, or Buddhists. The Brahmanic scriptures, with their bold speculative philosophy mixed with popular polytheism, can offer little to the solution of our problem. Most observers are inclined
to look upon Hinduism as a collection of rites, worships, beliefs, traditions, and mythologies, that are sanctioned by the sacred books and ordinances of Brahmins and propagated by Brahmanic teaching. There are quite as great differences between the forms of belief grouped under the term "Hindu Religion" as there are between any of the great religions of the world. Some of the doctrines are theistic, some atheistic and others pantheistic. In fact in its popular form Hinduism is something very different from the ordinary notion of religion as generally held among white men. It is rather, as Lewis Browne characterizes it, a "religio-social system" founded no doubt on the post-vedic scriptures but with little real connection with them save in a few points such as the veneration of Brahmins, the caste system, the transmigration of souls until they obtain salvation through Karma, Shakti, and Jnana, and the veneration of the cow. A man may entirely disbelieve in the Hindu trinity, he may invent new gods of his own, even foul and impure; he may worship them with the most revolting orgies; he may even abandon all belief in supernatural powers and yet remain a Hindu. There is no pope or high priest or council to decide questions of belief or prescribe rites. There is no ecclesiastical capitol or center. There are places noted for learned scholars and pundits such as Benares, Nattre, and Tanjore. But worshippers of Siva would never accept the ruling of a pundit of Vishnu, for instance. Thus Hinduism, so far as internal government is concerned, may be called a chaos, but as a result of this condition it is constantly transforming itself, splitting up into sects, taking in new deities and adopting new forms of worship.

Dr. Farquhar, who is recognized as the foremost authority on Hinduism among modern investigators, tries to condense the essentials of Hinduism into two brief statements. The first has to do with God as impersonal reality.

1. See Primer of Hinduism. P. 34
Under this pantheistic conception would be gathered all minor gods, and over against it stands the unreal phenomenal world which undergoes cyclic change. This world is explained by the doctrine of transmigration and Karma, and the object and goal of all serious-minded men is to get release from transmigration and be united with the one reality. The second category has to do with what he calls the "organizing conception of Hinduism" which centers in the divine priest, the inspired Veda and caste. His religion might therefore be called the technique by which he strives to rise to union with Brahma. But unlike the ordinary religious technique it lays no stress on prayer or sacrifice, since the oversoul is purely impersonal and so cannot be moved by cajolery or petition. Nor does it lay any emphasis on morality, for since the oversoul is not concerned with this illusory material world, necessarily it cannot be interested in the goodness or badness of the illusory deeds performed in it. Religion lays emphasis only on certain mystic exercises. It demands only concentration and suppression of all sense activity in guaranteeing Nirvana. After all action has been put to death Hinduism can promise everlasting inaction. All this theorizing and attempting to unravel a complex of abstruse beliefs is an exercise which rarely ever bothers the members of our "Believing World" as we see it in the Indian village, and yet we shall soon find traces of its influence in the actual practices of the people even though it is entirely beyond their ability to give any adequate explanation of its existence.

It is soon evident that however indefinite may be men's ideas of what constitutes Hinduism in theory, there can be no mistake regarding its importance in the village community in actual practice. India is the spiritual mother of half mankind. Not only Hinduism but also Buddhism had its birth in the ancient Vedic scriptures. All Indians, Hindus and Mohammedans alike, delight to contrast...
their spiritual-mindedness with the material-mindedness of the West. It has been well said of them that "they eat religiously, drink religiously, dress religiously, and sin religiously". Religion in the very framework or warp of Indian life. Not to put religion in the forefront of anything said about India is to throw the whole picture out of focus.

In the center of the village stands the temple, with the priest's house and the houses of the temple attendants in the immediate vicinity. Thither resort at any time of the day those who wish to pray for a child, or success or material boon. You may see them pass silently in, bow low before the image, pour over it their bowl of water, or make their offering of flowers or food, walk around the idol and then withdraw. The priest is the friend, guide and philosopher of the village. There are no villages in India without their priest. And while their duties do not call for any great skill or learning yet they have their own responsibilities. The simple villager dare not do anything without consulting him. He rises early, takes his bath, marks his body with the sign of his god, does his puja, then sets out, carrying the calendar of the year, to the house of the headman where he reads aloud the date and makes known the things which are auspicious on that particular day. Then he goes from house to house in similar fashion. Immerable questions are asked. When is the auspicious day for buying bullocks? Tell us the lucky time to commence building our house; select a day for the marriage of our daughter; give the horoscope of our sick son; will he recover? Thus he must consult his horoscope for marriages, fix the day to begin ploughing or to start on a journey. He must perform the marriage and funeral ceremonies and officiate at the anniversaries of dead relatives. There is a Tamil proverb to the effect that the doctor will not leave a
patient until he is dead and the priest will not leave him even after he is dead. On the first, second, eighth and sixteenth day after a person dies ceremonies must be performed, and monthly and yearly ceremonies thereafter. Besides these activities, there are numerous duties for the priest in connection with the temple where at least twenty-two ceremonial acts must be attended to daily by the priest and his assistants. The god has to be waked, bathed, fed, decorated, fanned in hot weather, cared for in sickness, put to sleep at night, etc.

Besides the great gods and goddesses of Brahmanic tradition, rural India has its own local divinities. The thrice eleven or thirty-three deities of the vedic poems have been multiplied in the Puranas into three hundred and thirty millions or more than one god for every man, woman and child in the country. These godlings as they are called are purely local and often without distinct names or functions. Their presence is denoted by a rough idol or a single block of stone or wood placed under a tree or rock or on some high place. It is daubed with vermilion colour as a token of reverence. Here the women make simple offerings of milk or fruit, or light a lamp at night. Some are kindly spirits who watch over the village, others are harmful and must be propitiated. But whether kindly or harmful, they are closer to the peasant than the great gods of the Brahmans, since they are intimately bound up with his house, his fields, and his cattle. The most popular tutelary deities are the Amma's (mothers). The small-pox goddess, for instance, is called Mariamma in South India, meaning mother of death. When a person is smitten with smallpox, the expression the people use is "the amma is taking her pastime over him". Similarly other goddesses preside over cholera etc. Ayenar is said to preside over the fields and herds of the peasantry and drive away the demons causing
disease, blight, and other calamities. Shrines of Ayanar are usually to
be seen among groups of trees just outside the villages. They are usually
surrounded with rude clay figures of horses, often life-size, on which
Ayanar is supposed to ride while keeping guard. He has two wives which
generally sit on each side of him and take an active part in driving away
the demons. The majority of demons are supposed to have been human beings
originally, especially people who have met a sudden or violent death. A
British officer, mortally wounded at Travancore, was afterwards worshipped
as a demon. When a woman dies within fifteen days after child birth, she
is thought to come back as a demon. A robber, who was hung at Trichinopoly,
became so popular as a demon, that children were constantly named after him.
All demons are fond of bloody sacrifices. One prefers the sacrifice of a
goat, another a hog, another a cock. Brandy was the favourite offering for the
British officer, as he had a reputation for loving it while alive.

In addition to these public religious observances, every Indian
home has its oratory, or at least its idol shelf, where is kept the row of
images or sacred stones that do duty for divinity. Every aspect of the
Brahman's house, its furniture, and the disposition of its rooms are reli-
giously determined. A religious ceremony accompanies a woman's conception.
Two more precede birth, and so on through life and for three generations
after death. A Hindu's morning ablutions, even the brushing of his teeth,
are defined by religious rule. The items of his diet, the material of his
utensils, his choice of a servant, the selection of a wife, the days when
he shall travel, where he shall travel, and, in short, all new undertakings
must receive religious sanction. Socially, religion determines who his
friends shall be, who he shall eat with, what profession he shall follow.

1. J. N. Farquhar "Primer of Hinduism. P. 147."
and curtails even the choice within very narrow limits. In fact his whole environment is religious. "There is not an object in Heaven or earth which the Hindu is not prepared to worship", says Sir Monier Williams. "Sun, moon, stars; rocks, stocks and stones; trees, shrubs and grass; sea pools and rivers; his own implements of trade; the animals he finds most useful; the noxious reptiles he fears; men remarkable for any extraordinary qualities; for great valour, sanctity, virtue or even vice; good and evil demons, ghosts, goblins, the spirits of departed ancestors; an infinite number of semi-human and semi-divine existences, inhabitants of the seven upper and the seven lower worlds each and all come in for share in divine honours or a tribute of more or less adoration." All life and everything that exists is of one piece with God's life and his own. Thus is the explanation for the Hindu's worshipping anything—his cooking utensil, bull, tree or the hideous potbellied image of Ganesh the elephant-headed god. And thus is the explanation for his reverence of all animal life and friendliness for birds, as well as his aversion for the beef-eating Englishman. Just how far and to what extent these religious beliefs and practices affect the economic and social life of the Indian Village will be determined in the following pages.
Chapter II

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

In an agricultural community anywhere the land is the real and permanent capital, and this is even more true of India than most any other country. The land is very much in an unimproved condition. There are no fences except temporary ones improvised for the protection of a special crop. Drains do not exist. Roads are tracks through the fields. There are a few embankments, a few wells, one or two water channels, the village houses and the agricultural stock. Bare treeless rocky hills or undulations are characteristic of all the black cotton soil areas of India. What trees do exist are usually on the village sites and along the lines of Nallas. Weeds are often more luxurious than crops.

According to the Director of Agriculture for the Bombay Presidency each cultivator should have a set of tools that would cost about eight dollars, consisting of one plough with yoke, one harrow, one seed drill, and two inter-culturing implements, but as a matter of fact not more than 43% of the cultivators are provided with such a complete set. A large variety of crops are usually grown together, probably because, the rainfall being precarious, such a system gives greater assurance for at least one crop; or they may figure that the crops ripening at different times may give them greater opportunity for harvesting them, or more probably they are attempting to get as high returns as possible from the small holdings worked. The only answer one receives from the villager is that it is done according to custom. A great many villagers take no care to preserve seed and so if money is not available they borrow from the shopkeeper with an agreement to pay double the amount when harvest comes.
The average yield per acre of land, of any kind of grain, runs about 180 pounds, which is of course extremely low. This low yield is said by agricultural experts to be due largely to weeds and pests, concerning which we will have something to say later.

Dr. Mann with the assistance of two or three experts from the Poona Agricultural College made a detailed study of two Deccan villages. Their investigation showed a return of about $1.50 per acre to the cultivating farmer when he did his own work, but when he hired the work done, a loss of about fifty cents per acre.

Another significant fact about the Deccan is that it is not a cattle country. The grazing almost everywhere is very poor. Though it is a country where goats and sheep can find a living, cattle have either to be fed for a considerable part of the year or get along, as they often do, in a half-starved condition, and be swept away in large numbers when famine strikes the country, as happens every few years. Most of the working animals are of the hardy hybrid type. The cows and milk buffaloes are of the same hybrid type so the proportion of dry animals is very high and the yield of milk very low. A cow cannot be depended upon to give more than three pounds of milk per day, while buffaloes are expected to give five or six pounds per day and on this account are usually preferred as a milk animal.

In our Deccan village community we will also have to list as one of the important assets the item of wells. In fact it is often spoken of as one of the most important factors in village life and development. Wells practically always penetrate the trap rock and so are very expensive to dig, moreover, they do not penetrate into any generalized water-bearing strata but depend on water in fissures, which often makes them speculative ventures. It is calculated that even in good communities about forty per cent. of the wells
are failures. The digging and blasting of a well to thirty or forty feet costs from two to four hundred Rupees, so that if the small farmer fails to strike water he is ruined. Even if the farmer is successful in obtaining water the Indian system of inheritance, which has broken the holdings into many fragments of various sizes in different places, makes the irrigation of his fields from one well expensive and often impossible, while the caste system prevents co-operation in the efficient use of wells capable of yielding more water than is actually necessary for the party owning it.

For most of the Deccan country, so far as investigations have shown, twenty acres must be taken as a standard for what is known as an economic holding, but in the study referred to it was found that seventy five per cent. of the holders had land below the amount necessary to provide a living for a family of five, even if the land was held in one block. By far the greater portion of the holdings could not under the most favourable circumstances maintain their owners, and so it is necessary to rely on other sources of income, either at home or abroad, to support their families. The general picture then is one of economic poverty. Sir Frederick Treves, in his account of a tour of the East, speaks of "the multitude of men, women and children a little below the most meagre comfort level and a little above the nearest reach of starvation! "The country looks homeless and gives an impression of poorness and melancholy." We have a state of society which to western eyes is almost inconceivably simple and elementary, destitute of comforts and conveniences that we are accustomed to regard as essential to civilized life. Though the area under cultivation, taking the country as a whole, is not accurately known, as the returns from native States are incomplete, yet Sir T. W. Holderness maintains that we shall not be far wrong if we assume that there is less than one acre of cultivated land per head of the

1. Present exchange is about 280 Rupees per $100.
There is probably no country in the world where the land is expected to do so much.

Fred B. Fisher gives this description of an Indian Village home:

"Mud walls a foot thick, grass thatched roof, and dirt floor, is the home of ninety seven per cent. of India's population. Most of the huts have but one room, no windows and one door. Usually the cooking is done on a little mud stove built against the outside wall near the door. If the fire is built inside the smoke must find its way out through the door or roof as there are no chimneys. The clay floors are crusted with cowdung mixed with clay, which hardens to a glossy surface like hard wood, and which last very well as the ryots do not wear shoes. The one universal piece of furniture, which serves as table, chair and cradle by day, and bedstead by night, is the charpoy, a single frame cot of poles lashed upon four legs. Hemp rope or broad tape are darned back and forth lengthwise and crosswise, taking the place of springs and matress. Chairs would be in the way for crouching on the heels is the customary way of sitting down. During the day this bed is tipped up on one end or used as general utility table. There is no attempt at decoration in the ordinary village homes—no rugs, embroideries, pictures, etc.—most Indians are too poor. A nation with an average income of $20 per year does not have much margin of ostentation. The well-to-do ryot is distinguished with his brass bowls and cooking utensils instead of earthenware, and by the value of the gold and silver bracelets and nose rings of his women folks. Among the very poor of the lower castes and outcastes, it is customary to share this one room with whatever cattle, goats, and chickens the family are lucky enough to own. The village headman may have a more elaborate home, with a couple of small rooms opening off the main room and even a small courtyard in front with a small entrance gate. But the extra rooms are usually used for storing grain.
and with precarious instinct life crowds into one small room. The Indian's clothing varies with the temperature. Chapati is the national bread—an unleavened cake on the outside of a metal bowl inverted over the fire; pulse is the ryot's potato and vegetable curry his favourite dish. It is little wonder then that in a land with over seventy million people continually hungry that people should continually refer to poverty as their mother.

There are evidently two ways to meet the situation: one is to increase the earning capacity of the bread winner and the other is to preserve the present income for family expenditure. In India, however, the farmer who finds his farm unable to supply the normal requirements of the family is immediately confronted with the same insurmountable difficulties as is the business or professional man. Occupations are distributed by caste and handed down from father to son. The prevailing notion is that it is largely due to caste that the earning power of the Indian is so low. Caste forbids the high caste man to drive a plough or keep a shop. Caste and religion make it obligatory for him to marry a wife before he can support a family. Caste with its thousands of watertight compartments makes it necessary for every person to contribute to a host of professional men and artisans whose work they are prohibited from engaging in.

Let us see how it works in actual practice. For instance, it would be possible for the ordinary Indian family to do its own washing during spare time, but caste has set aside 140,000 men in Southern India with exclusive rights to wash clothes. Every village has its dhobi, or dhobis, and he with his wife and children wash the clothes of all the men and women in the village.
The wife collects the dirty clothes from the women's apartments. They give her a little oil with which to anoint her head, a cold meal and perhaps some cakes for the children. She carries the soiled clothes of the women hooked on a stick lest she be contaminated. The dhobi and his family live in some corner of the village in a house which is usually built by the villagers. His equipment is a few earthen vessels in which his food is cooked and a few earthen pots in which to boil the clothes. These are placed on an oven, triangular in shape, made of mud. He starts off about four o'clock in the morning with his donkey and children to the dhobi field where the unfed donkey seeks its own food among the rocks or brush. He takes up a garment, dips it in water and beats it against a stone with an invocation to his god. Then he places the cloth on a stone and raises his right hand to his forehead, and stands in a bending attitude in order to seek Heaven's benediction on the labour of the day. While he beats the dirty clothes he will be heard humming some song of his own composition about his father-in-law or his ass, usually without rhyme or melody, or understandable to anyone but himself. His wife turns up later with a potful of cold food obtained from the village folk the previous night. She stirs the watery substance with her right hand, adds some buttermilk and salt and pours it in his hand as a cup. After meal she serves botelmut and chunam and then the dhobi lays his head on her lap and listens to the latest gossip of the village. In the evening, after the clothes have been rinsed in water with lime in it and finished in water mixed with cowdung, the clothes are spread and dried and brought home on the back of the donkey to be distributed to the owners according to the Dhobi mark. He and his wife have free use of the clothes of the villagers either as clothing or bedding for short periods, and have the right to lend them out to a neighbor for a special occasion. The washerman thus belongs to a separate caste and
the son of a washerman is a washerman from compulsion rather than choice.

The same is true of the village barber. His appliances are very few, a few roughly made iron razors, a rusty pair of scissors, a tiny brass cup to hold water, a small piece of iron sharpened at the end to pare finger-nails, a thorn extractor, a coarse pair of pincers for extracting thorns, a rough bone and an old piece of leather, and he is fully equipped. Like the Dhobi, his house is in the corner of the village, built at the expense of the inhabitants. He gets ten cents per annum from each house and a handful of food daily. He receives various gifts, a fee when he shaves the hair of a firstborn child the first time, and a cloth from the bridgroom when he shaves and dresses his hair for the wedding. He receives his customers under a tree, or on a bank, or in the back yard. He begins by sharpening his razor on a small bone, finishing it on a small piece of leather or on his bare hand. He wets the head with water, rubs it well with his hand, and begins at the spot rubbed, be it head or face. The patient shouts "Appa", but our barber keeps on only stopping to sharpen the razor again on his leg or hand. Many places on the head and face will be bleeding but he will tell some interesting story to divert attention. If he has a spite at some one, he will half shave him, then start a row and the victim covers his head and goes home in disgrace. Sometimes he turns village surgeon and uses alcoholic liquors for chloroform. His wife shaves the heads of Brahman widows twice a month and acts as midwife for the village. Even Mr. Pandian suggests that, since she has no knowledge of medical science and is without instruments for difficult cases, many lives are lost through rough and unskilful treatment and contends that reform in this matter is urgently needed.
In like manner the potter digs earth, carries it home, strains it, treads it, makes a round ball of it, and places it on the top of a machine made out of a few pieces of wood in the form of a wheel, and thus makes all sizes of pots, jars, pipes, idols of dogs, cats, tigers, elephants, etc. His wages are a fixed measure of grain from every farmer who receives his supplies, and other payments as these supplies are delivered.

The bricklayer doesn't require much skill, but carries a trowel and plumbline to make the owner of the house believe that he is using great ingenuity. He engages a few boys and girls and some women to help him and pays them three or four Annas (6 or 8 cents) per day. A ceremony is held when the doorposts are placed in position and the blessing of the family god is invoked to keep the house from falling and to get him to stand at the door post to keep the angel of death from entering. A lamb is sacrificed as a blood offering and the lintel painted with red paint as the sign of the blood sacrifice. When the building is completed the bricklayer is rewarded by the owner with a pair of new clothes and a turban and relations and friends are invited to a feast. On this occasion he gives alms to the village poor and invites the family priest who arranged the auspicious day when the house was completed. A holy fire is kindled in the middle of the house and a lamp placed in the proper place in the wall. Two earthen pots are filled with holy water, several measures of rice placed on plantain leaves, with plantains, vegetables and flowers nicely arranged. The family and priest sit before these offerings while the priest offers prayers for about an hour. Then he blesses the owner of the house and his family and sprinkles the urine of the cow all over the building. Also, he blesses the ovens and fireplaces, and the
ceremony close with a feast which the lady of the house prepares for the guests. The family priest bundles up the rice, fruit, vegetables, etc., and takes them home for his own enjoyment.

In an agricultural country like India the services of the carpenter and blacksmith are indispensable. There are 15,741 blacksmiths and 31,237 carpenters in southern India. The blacksmith makes blades for ploughs, hinges, hooks, locks, keys, axes, knives, sickles, spades, croppers, etc. Some have their workshop under trees and others in thatched huts. He has a few hammers of different sorts, a bellows and some pincers. The workshop is usually crowded with men. Indians are never in a hurry and blacksmiths are no exception. Men who come early in the morning from another village to have an axe sharpened will spend the whole day in gossip and idle talk and go home starving in the evening. Sometimes the customer must stay several days. As compensation the smith gets a fixed fee from every house, which varies according to the position of the tenants. Some, however, pay for the work as it is done. In addition to the fixed wage he also gets ears of corn at harvest.

The carpenter makes the yokes and other wood implements for ploughing, the handles for hoes, axes and weeding tools, as well as door posts, rafters, idols, wooden spoons, village carts, etc. And he receives as his wage a certain number of bushels of grain from each farmer, as well as separate payment for each article constructed.

It can readily be seen that there is great economic waste in this system, which lays the community at the mercy of a man whose job is guaranteed, whose wage is also largely guaranteed, and who therefore can take his own time and is perfectly sure of getting all the business of the community. There is no redress in the case of complaint as to the quality of the work done, the time wasted or the inconvenience involved. All these conditions contribute to the poverty of the people.
A marked characteristic of Indian life is an excessive fondness for jewellery, which is another contributing cause of India's poverty. As a class the goldsmiths have their own priests, and won't allow Brahmin priests to officiate for them. Their girls must be married before the attainment of womanhood, and widow remarriage is strictly forbidden. He usually lives in grand style and has his workshop in his own house. His tools are a few hammers of different sizes, pinces and tongs, a few molds and a furnace made out of broken earthen vessels. He makes earrings, finger rings, bangles, nose jewels, anklets and toe jewels, upper ear ornaments, belts, head ornaments, and jewels to conceal the nakedness of girls and boys. As a class of business people their reputation is not very high for honesty. They steal, mix gold with copper and postpone their work while they use their customers' money to pay some old debts, etc.

There is no village in India which does not have a bazaar of its own. If the village is large there is keen competition between the bazaar men. They handle jaggery, chillies, coriander, saffron, cloves, dried ginger, tamarind, betelnuts, tobacco, salt, onions, garlic and a few other things required for the daily use of the villagers. There is great excitement and confusion at rush times. If he hasn't got an article he won't say so, but will say he has tamarind or some other commodity. It is a bad omen to say he hasn't got something. These bazaar men are also very fond of listening to gossip even though half a dozen customers may be waiting.

Another seemingly fundamental part of the village community is the money lender. The villagers, being agricultural, get money only in the harvest season. This leads them in times of necessity to the money lender. The taxes,
marriages, and funerals all require money, and so do the frequent lawsuits. The money lender is usually one of the shrewdest men in the village. He knows the ins and outs of everybody's business and is always ready to take advantage of every opportunity for money making. He lends money at high rates of interest to encourage law suits. Money lenders have even been accused of spoiling young men and making their dada pay. And to stand well in the community they will finish the work on some temple or endow a rest house for Brahmans. But on the whole they enjoy the unenviable reputation that their evils are many and their virtues few.

One of the lowest and most despised classes are called madigas, or leather workers, who live in dwellings separated from the village. Their huts are miserable, being usually surrounded by ditches of stagnant water. The holes around the huts are utilized as tanneries. Some eat dead animals which they have received from the villagers as part of their wages. They make shoes, act as messengers, and watch the cremation ground or corn fields. The madiga also has his fixed allowance from each villager.

There are still other classes like the shepherds, swineherds, oil pressers, stone masons, and sweepers, all of whom have their tasks cut out in a fashion similar to that of the classes already mentioned. Perhaps one other class should be mentioned, since it exercises a very unhealthy influence on the village community. It is included in the class of basket makers. These people live in small huts and indulge quite freely in alcoholic liquors. Like some other aboriginal tribes they are Devil worshippers, and morality is of little concern to them. They are inveterate robbers and do big business at the fairs and festivals in the way of pilfering. They make baskets from palm leaves and the branches of other trees. These are used for sowing grain, removing cow-dung, and the holding of grain in the house. In this caste if a man wants a divorce, he must gather the elders of the tribe from the different villages and
provide the court with a jar of toddy before presenting his testimony. Usually the elders are so drunk that they go home before the trial is over, and he then has to provide another pot if he has the money before he can get his men together again. In this caste children are promised in marriage even before birth, and at that time the bride's father provides a feast. If the omens are not suspicious or if anything should happen to prevent the marriage, the bride's father pays the bill for the drink and other articles used in the betrothal.

Just how such a system came into being is not agreed upon among authorities. Some contend that since the word VARNA means colour in Sanskrit, the original intention was to avoid race mixture by marriage. Others would make it almost wholly an economic matter. Anderson enumerates seven classes of castes, the tribal type, the functional or occupational type, the sectarian type, the national type, and those formed from crossing, migration, and changes of custom. In actual practice, however, there can be little question concerning the economic importance of caste. The majority of castes are correlated with occupations. The four original castes were: the Brahman or priest; the Kshatriya or warrior; the Vaisya or tradesman; and the sudra or farmer. The important thing for our consideration is that divine authority for these is found in the Rig-Veda. A late professor of Sanskrit in the presidency college Calcutta, in his Tagore Law Lecture, describes caste as the "chief characteristic of Hinduism". Although Hinduism contains a whole farrago of theologies, philosophies, and sacrificial systems, nevertheless its one dominant note is caste, which as Browne describes it "is an elaborate tissue of ancient religious-social laws so hardened as to be now almost indestructible". These laws are

1. Murdoch—"Popular Hinduism" P. 57.
in turn fortified by the code of Manu compiled about the second century of
the Christian era, which has for its apparent purpose the erection of a wall
of law around the faith so that none could stray from it. The stoutest
buttress in the Hindu wall are the caste distinctions, and so they receive
the main emphasis in the works of the law givers. The superiority of the
Brahman and the inferiority of the labourer are said to be ordered in Heaven
according to divine plan "for the prosperity of the world". The Brahman, at
first simply an assistant at sacrifices, afterwards becomes the Purohita or
family priest, and after a long struggle with the Kshatriyas becomes ascendant
in the caste system. By degrees he invested the caste system with a sacred
character in the eyes of the people and gradually expanded it into an immense
spider's web which finally separated class from class, family from family,
man from man, and which, while it has rendered all united action impossible,
has enabled the Brahman to rule supreme. Manu reserves his strongest invective
for the son of a Brahman woman by a Sudra. He characterizes him as "that
lowest of mortals", and condemns him "to live outside the village, to clothe
himself in the garments of the dead, to eat from broken dishes, to execute
animals, and to carry out the corpses of friendless men". Punishments pre-
scribed in the code of Manu for offences against caste are much more rigorous
that for other offences. For stealing grain a man must go back and be a mouse
in his next life; for stealing brass he is born a gander; but if a Brahman
breaks his caste rules he is to be reborn a vomit-eating demon. A Kshatriya
breaking caste will be re-born a demon eating excrement and dead bodies; and
a farmer breaking caste becomes a demon feeding on putrid carrion. The laws

1. Farquhar "Primer of Hinduism". P. 80
fencing off each caste from those above are also severe. If a Sudra or any member of a lower caste listens intentionally to a recitation of the Veda, his ears shall be filled with molten tin. If he recites Veda texts his tongue shall be cut out. If he remembers them his body shall be split in twain. (Gautama Dharmasutra) The man born in an outcaste section of a village may as soon think of building his house in the other group as a pig may think of going to live in his master's front room. "The palmyra tree has no shade and the pariah has no decency", says a common proverb. "The abodes of the Chandala must be out of town. They must not have the use of entire vessels, their sole wealth must be dogs and asses. Their clothes must be the mantle of the deceased, their dishes for food broken pots, their ornaments rusty iron, continually must they roam from place to place. Let no man who regards his duty, religious and civil, hold any intercourse with them. Let their transactions be confined to themselves and their marriages only between equals. Let food be given them on potsherds but not by the hand of the giver, and let them not move about by night in cities or towns".

In the Law of Manu atonement for killing a Sudra is the same as that for killing a cat, dog, frog, owl or crow.—132 XI

"Therefore a Sudra, whether bought or not bought, (the Brahman) may compell to practice servitude; for that (Sudra) was created by the self-existent merely for the service of the Brahmans",—413. "A Brahman may take possession of the goods of a Sudra with perfect peace of mind, for, since nothing at all belongs to this (Sudra) as his own he is one whose property may be taken away by his master". (Book VIII P417) "The leavings of food

1. Holland—"The Goal of India".
shall be given him and the old clothes; so too the blighted part of the grain; so too the old furniture". (Book X. P. 125) "If a low born man endeavours to sit down by the side of a high born man, he should be banished after being branded on the hip, or (the king) may cause his backside to be cut off”. (Book VIII. P. 281) "He who tells him the law, and he who enjoins upon him religious observances he indeed, together with that (Sudra) sinks into the darkness of hell called Asamvrtta" (unbounded—Book IV. P. 81) A liar or a thief, a drunkard or a traitor who is to be robbed is called a Pariah. These bonds of caste are of steel and, as the proverb says, just as soon may a black puppy turn white as a barber become a Brahmin.

Everyone acquainted with village life in India knows that while in the eyes of the British law the outcaste has equal rights with the men of all castes, in point of fact, even in British India, there is many a village postoffice and many a government courthouse in which the Pariah dare not set his foot. He dare not wear his loin cloth so that it hangs below the knee. He must stand in servile posture in the presence of every village headman. If by some rare good fortune he should gain a little piece of land, he could not retain the ownership of it without constant watchfulness and struggle against encroachments and plots by his caste neighbours. Often for weeks together he finds nothing to do, and for months in every normal year he and his family may have to get along on one meal a day, and all the time believe that he is being cursed by his own god. According to the doctrine of transmigration he represents the souls of men and women who were especially wicked in former incarnations and who are now expiating their sins. Hence it is not right to pity him nor attempt to help him. Each one must work out his own Karma, and only by draining his cup to the dregs can the poor outcaste earn his way
This system is enforced by means of governing bodies often called Panchayats whose business it is to see that no member of the caste engages in a degrading occupation, works for lower wages than his brethren, eats forbidden food, or marries a woman of another caste. The extreme penalty for breach of caste regulations is expulsion. Thereafter no one will eat with him, or visit his house, or marry his daughter, nor will a Brahman serve him, or barber shave him, or washerman wash his clothes. It is sometimes argued in defense of caste that it provides a basis of solidarity within each group, offering a natural unit for mutual assistance and comradeship.

Sir Bampfylde Fuller attributes to the caste system India's power of resistance to famine, and contends that it establishes some such responsibility for relief as was thrown on the English villages by the poor law settlement. But this claim overlooks the fact that about 95% of the well-to-do are segregated in the two upper groups, where comparatively few calls are made upon them, leaving 300,000,000 dependent on people who are in the main no better off than themselves. Others justify it as a primitive sort of trade guild, but judged from the utilitarian point of view it has not proved itself very efficient or successful even on that score. It forbids Indians from leaving India and thus they cannot better their condition in other parts of the world. Moreover, local manufactures are discouraged by making some of the most useful employments degrading.

We have seen in the foregoing discussion how intimately religion is linked up with the daily life of the Hindu. When prayers for particular objects are offered, they are generally for temporal blessings, a son, the health of the

family, prosperity in business, etc. The shopkeeper has an image of Ganesa to which he pays reverence before commencing business, the dhobi lifts up his hands in adoration as he beats his first cloth on the rock, a religious ceremony must be gone through before starting to build a house or occupying it, etc. Every object that benefits the Hindu and helps to provide him with a livelihood becomes for the time being his fetish or god. On particular days the farmer prays to his plough, the fisher to his net, the writer adores his pen, the banker his account books, the carpenter his tools, the woman her basket and other articles which assist her in her household labours. The thugs who murder travellers in the name of the goddess Kali, worship the pickaxe which they carry for the speedy burial of their victims. Even their hopes beyond the vale of time seem to have a materialistic tinge. Those masses, suggests Brown, still hunger for life, but life enriched and made Brahmantically luxuriant. Peasants flock to the temples with offerings of meat and flowers and pray fearfully to the idols of wood and stone, imagining that thus they can win for themselves an easier life in the higher castes when they are born again. Nirvana to them is not a mental state, but a riot of physical joy in some other world. To win it they will go to almost incredible excesses of piety. Millions of them when old and decrepit will crawl on their bellies to the river Ganges, believing that by drawing the last breath by its side a dying man's soul receives certain and immediate transportation to Shivas Heaven.

All this seems a flat contradiction of what we have already said concerning India's anti-materialistic spirit which she so dearly loves to proclaim as worthy of emulation, and which has impressed so many of her friends and observers. Is India, like other nations of history, in the midst
of great economic stress and dire poverty, comforting herself in the belief that beyond the present existence there is another existence where joy and plenty is to be had in abundance, and that, in the balance of fortunes, the greater the suffering now the greater will be the reward hereafter? However, that may be, one is continually impressed by the strange disregard for material progress, which may be noted as a contributing factor in India's national poverty. The Hindus as a people seem to be equipped with a deep and definite tendency to think rather than act. They are much more given to hard labour in contemplation and meditation that to hard labour in producing and using tools and machines. As a result, their highest achievements have been in the realm of ideas rather than of concrete things. The varying fortunes of men together with their extraordinary differences in character are explained by the doctrine of transmigration and its pendant Karma. The word Karma literally means action but the doctrine means the inevitable working out of action in new life. The idea is that a man's body, character, capacities and temperament, his birth, wealth, and station and the whole of his experiences in life, whether of happiness or of sorrow, together form the just retribution of his deeds, good or bad, done in earlier existences. Thus as it is good or bad deeds that form Karma, and thus lead to rebirth, it is evident that if by any means a man can cease acting, he may thereby get release from the necessities of rebirth. Quite naturally action was taken to mean the ordinary business of life, and so arose the universal conviction, that for a man to reach release he must give up the ordinary life of man with all its gains, pleasures and interests and live an actionless existence turning away from the unreal world and drawing near to the one actionless reality. Brahma is a great passionless lake, whose surface is unstirred by any desire, unreflected by any breath that comes from the world of men's affairs. And so the
Holy man is he who has reduced business and activity of every kind to a minimum and sits passionless, unmoved, indifferent to the world around him. So eager to part with the world to the untermost were the Jains that many of their monks wore not a scrap of clothing. Twelve years of the most severe asceticism were considered necessary for salvation after which, if a monk did not wish to live longer, he was recommended to starve himself to death. So India today swarms with over 7,000,000 ascetics who live an idle life wandering about from one place of pilgrimage to another or in the jungles practicing austerities, and who therefore are an economic loss to the country.

One of the most characteristic features of Indian Industry is the loss of working time due to religious festivals and observances. E. L. King in "Other Indias" calculates, from official figures, that in January, 1921 there was a loss of 700,000 days of working time; in February, 1922 950,000 days, and in March, 1923 a million and a half days, on account of religious observances. The lowest figure recorded in the last three years of record was twenty thousand. Other observers claim much larger losses. The influence on morale may be estimated from a published statement to the effect that it takes five Indians working steadily to accomplish the same as two Chians or one American. To this may be added a lack of initiative brought about largely through an exaggerated confidence in Brahmanism, which encourages passivity. The Brahman is the established leader. Without his guidance and advice no new thing can be undertaken.

Another factor contributing to the low earning capacity of the Indian has already been referred to, namely, the low yield from his crop. One of the many heresies which sprang out of Hinduism about the second century of the
Christian era was Jainism. A Jain means a conqueror. Mahavira, the first Jain, is said to have gotten the victory after twelve years of self denial, but he himself maintains that he conquered without the aid of gods or Brahmans. He disbelieved the gods, scoffed at prayer, derided the Vedas and decried the entire caste system. He believed that the way to victory was by the willful annihilation of self and the destruction of all desire. He demanded of his disciples that they do injury to no living thing, that they remain ever poor and ever meek. He strictly warned them against showing any favor to women. He commanded the true follower not to speak of women, nor look at them, nor converse with them, nor claim them as his own, nor do their work. Above all he forbade his Monks to kill. And of all the prohibitions, this was the one most scrupulously observed. Some sat immobile for years, refusing to stir a limb or even breathe deeply, lest thereby they destroy aught of those small insects with which the air of India swarms. So if we were to visit a Jain temple in Southern India today we would find Jain ascetics, sweeping the ground in front of them, and with cloths tied over their mouths. The ground is swept to avoid stepping on any insect and thus committing murder, and the cloth tied over the mouth for the same purpose. Though there are not more than one and a half million Jains in India, yet the doctrine is no longer confined to the Jain sect but accepted generally in the Hindu community. This doctrine is a logical offshoot of transmigration which teaches that the soul may, in any one of its numerous rebirths, become a monkey or a rat or a mouse or a louse or any other insect, and thus one is always confronted with the risk of killing some of his relations when he destroys even insect life. The far reaching significance of such a belief is easily comprehended when its
bearing on the extermination of crop pests and the larger species of destructive animals is considered. The British Government alone spends over Rs 200,000 every year for the destruction of wild beasts, and, according to the statement of Lord Ronaldshay, 26,000 people and 100,000 head of cattle lose their lives from the ravages of tigers and snakes every year, while the destruction to crops is enormous. One authority has estimated the rat population at over 800,000,000, which, in addition to the part they play in spreading plague, eat up annually about $5,000,000 worth of grain. Moreover, many a farmer is cow poor, and in a period of famine much suffering and financial loss come from unwillingness to have the farm stock butchered and used for food.

What may in general be termed calamities are another source of economic loss to the village community. A country that depends almost entirely on agriculture carries all of its eggs in one basket. If the crops are bad, its one industry ceases to produce and everybody feels the effect. Sir T. W. Holderness says: "If we had a complete record of the fortunes of an Indian village during the last three hundred years, we should probably find that its population had ever and anon been blotted out by some terrible drought." In one village the famine of 1918-19 caused the death of 59.7% of the bullocks, of 80.5% of the cows and 74% of the buffaloes. Many fires take place during the hot season, wiping out at times entire villages. The rainfall is excessively variable in amount, so much so that the average figures usually given have little or no practical meaning. The distribution of the rain, and particularly the late rain in September and October, is so uncertain as to make the rabi or cold weather crop a very great gamble. And the rain is so local that places two or three miles from one another may stand, in respect to Rabi
crops, on a different basis. The rainfall ranges all the way from approximately eight to thirty six inches in a year. Sometimes the Monsoon is a complete failure. Precariousness of the rainfall tends to lessen initiative and prevent progress. Yet these are the conditions which prevail over hundreds if not thousands of villages in the Deccan. Many of the fires are caused by "witches" in order to frighten the superstitious villagers and get their money. They have no fire department and lack of unity and co-operation on account of the caste system makes an effective method of dealing with these incessant fires impossible. These seasonal rains are in the hands of the gods, but the British Government has thwarted to a great extent any evil intentions of the gods so far as the future is concerned by digging 75,000 miles of canals and making possible the irrigation of over 40,000,000 acres of land. Most of this, however, is in the Ganges Basin, and it seems likely that vast areas of the South land, especially in the native states, will have to continue to rely on their gods for a good monsoon for many years to come. Perhaps in no other country in the world where the average production is so low do the inhabitants expend so large a proportion of the resources on social and religious purposes. Or, as one writer observes, "where people earn their money like a horse and spend it like an ass". Girls must be married at a very early age or the parents suffer social ostracism in this world and Hell fire in the next. In a recent investigation of conditions in Bombay it was shown that 4\% of the families expended on marriages alone amounts equalling the total income of the family for the year; and 23\% of the families expended over half the family income and 73\% expended over one

1. Mann—"Land and Labour in a Deccan Village" P. 95
fourth of the family income for the same purpose. An unfortunate man
with several daughters is in a horrible dilemma, as he is almost sure
to have to go into debt before he can dispose of them on the marriage
market, where young men are able to command a good price. The various
certificates and degrees which the schools and universities grant all
add to the marriageable value of their possessors according to a sharply
graduated scale of rupees. Caste wealth, physique and good looks are
other determining elements. About 1907 a Law graduate of Calcutta
University could demand about $3,300 from the family of a young lady for
her privilege of becoming his bride. The sacred Tulasi plant which is
grown in the house yard is sometimes married to a representation of
Vishnu, called the salagrama, and thousands of rupees are sometimes
spent on the occasion. At one time eight elephants, two hundred camels,
and four hundred horses were used in a wedding procession.

The funeral expenditures of the older members of the family
also involve a great expenditure. In the Punjab the average cost is
said to be Rs 500. A well-to-do person in Bengal, says Sir Monier
Williams, would incur the everlasting obloquy of his family and friends
and be almost excommunicated from society if he spent less than six or
seven thousand rupees on the funeral of a father, and on the other
ceremonies consequent on his death. It is well known that the expendi-
tures incurred on such occasions by rich Rajas and Zamindars of high
families has often impoverished them for the remainder of their lives.
Instances are on record of a single funeral and Shraddha costing a sum
equivalent to one hundred and twenty thousand pounds, the greater part
of that amount being squandered on worthless Brahmins, indolent pandits.

1. Murdoch "Hinduism" p. 15
hypocritical devotees, and vagabond religious mendicants. Gaya, about fifty-five miles south of Patna, is the most frequented place for the performance of Shradhas. Their efficacy is such that, wherever the departed relatives may be, they are at once taken to Vishnu's Heaven, Vaikuntha. The expense is proportionately great. To secure the complete advantage, a round of ceremonies must be performed at about a hundred distinct places, while the fees paid to the rapacious priesthood, called Gayawals, are enormous. Money for the purpose has often to be borrowed at high interest. Jewels are given in security while the borrower pays the interest.

Gifts to Brahmins are most meritorious. In the times of the Rigveda, men sought to win the regard of the Gods, or to persuade them to give their help by sacrifice, hymn and prayer. Sacrifice came to be regarded as a mysterious operation which if faithfully carried out would irresistibly compel the gods to grant the appropriate reward. If only carried far enough, sacrifices would exalt a man to the level of the gods. The accurate performance of every detail of the ritual thus became a matter of extreme importance. For this reason the priest became all-powerful. His help was needed at every point in the intricate ceremonial of the altar. Without him the layman was helpless. Hence the divine authority of the Brahman was fully acknowledged and became firmly rooted in the religious practice of the nation. Fees paid to them were declared to be quite as meritorious as sacrifices offered to the celestials. Henceforth the old sacrifices were greatly extended and elaborated so that no layman could conduct them with accuracy, and the day of Brahman supremacy had dawned. "If a man sell his cow he will go to hell; if he give her to

l. Murdoch—"Hinduism" P. 13 33.
a Brahman he will go to heaven". If on Ganga's anniversary whole villages are given to Brahmans, the person presenting them will be a million times more glorious that the sun, he will have a million virgins, many carriages and palanquins, and jewels, and he will live in heaven with his father as many years as there are particles in the land given to the Brahmans. One of the established customs of the day is the feeding of Brahmans on all important occasions which helps to swarm India with Sanyasas engaged in a life of idleness at the expense of a long suffering public.

Another sinking hole for the public's money is in Chatterams and temples. Chatterams are convenient loafing places and many homeless Brahmans subsist by travelling from one to another. Some are taken care of by a brotherhood of monks who are non-brahman. Insolvent and broken down merchants and those disgusted with life through various disasters, forsake their homes and relations and join this brotherhood of monks. They are then cared for all the days of their lives. All the heads of these inns are vegetarians and shiviteg in religion. One always wonders at the tremendous force of impulse which impells men to devote so much labour, so much time, so much treasure and so much consecrated care to giving expression in wood and stone to their religious ideas. It is said that 1200 carpenters and masons worked sixteen years upon the construction of the great Sun temple near Puri, which is 190 feet high. Its cost consumed twelve years' revenue of the province. Benares on the banks of the Ganges contains over two thousand temples and unaccounted lesser shrines. Idols grotesque beyond description are to be found everywhere—elephant headed bodies, three eyed gargoyles, monsters with many heads, and all

1. Farquhar "Primer of Hinduism" P. 20
manner of other such fear inspiring creations. And to these idols, which increase yearly in numbers and monstrousity, the millions of India give their adoration, and their substance.

While 40,000,000 of people go continually hungry, the monkeys must be fed. And women will go to snake holes and place their offerings of milk and eggs and fling offerings of meat in the air to feed Brahmans. Rites supposed to represent Garuda, the vehicle of Vishnu.

It is little wonder then that such credulous and simple folk are continually at the mercy of cunning and mercenary minded priests and fakes. An idol is sometimes put in chains, because according to the ideas of the Hindus, the god has got into debt. The people are told that the creditors refuse to set him at liberty until the whole sum of money has been paid. Alarmed at the sight of their deity in irons, they come forward with the sum required and the idol is restored to liberty. Or the idol may become very ill on account of seeing the devotion of the people becoming less and less. The priests take down the idol, rub it with the various drugs and set before it all sorts of medicines. While this is going on messengers are sent abroad to spread the news. The people, seeing what has happened, hasten with gifts and offerings. The deity beholding such proof of reviving piety feels himself better and resumes his place. Again large numbers of men called Pandas, pilgrim-hunters, go about the country in all directions to entice people to visit Puri. They represent that all sorts of advantages will result from this meritorious act. The ground around Puri is said to be all stream with gold, although on account of the wickedness of Kali-Yug, it appears to be common dust. Many of the pilgrims are women, who sometimes
follow these pilgrim hunters against the consent of their male relatives. Numbers die by the way, and skeletons may be found scattered along the principal routes.

Finally in order to furnish men with abundant opportunity for the expression of charity and the gaining of religious merit there are, so it was stated in the Bengal Provincial Council not long ago, wealthy men called "Sirdars" who import into the various communities some of the worst cases of lepers and employ them at so much a month. The employer furnishes a hovel for these lepers to live in and takes what the beggar leper receives from the public, and so fattens on the suffering of their fellow country men.

No statement of the economic condition of the Indian village would be complete without giving some consideration to the question of over-population. It is a fact that during the last thirty years the people of India, in spite of plagues, famines, and high infant mortality, increased about twenty per cent, or by more than fifty million. Our problem seems to be to find out whether in a country like India, where a wife and children are often looked upon somewhat as property, the various members of the family are an economic asset or liability. Dr. Mann in his study of two Deccan villages previously referred to says, "In order to get an idea of the economic position of the people of a village we must try to obtain an idea of the standard of life which they themselves consider necessary. Such a standard is not easy to get among people who do not keep accounts".

After many inquiries a minimum standard was fixed below which it was con-

1. Macnaghten "Hindus.ism" p. 48-54
2. Oldrieve "India's Lepers" p. 26
sidered a self respecting family could not go. The calculations were made on the basis of a family consisting of one man, two women and two children. The actual average number in the village studied was 1.4 men, 1.7 women, and 1.9 children. Rs 160 per year are allowed for grain, salt chillies, oil and sugar. Rs 12 per adult and Rs 6 per child is allowed for clothing. As most of the people build their own houses nothing is allowed for rent, light is rarely used and firing is found in the jungle. So he thinks three per cent. of the total income sufficient for everything after food and clothing. On this basis he proceeds to divide the village into three classes:

1) Those families in which the income derived from land is sufficient in an average year to maintain them in a sound economic position.

2) The families in which the income derived from land together with that derived from outside labour is sufficient in an average year to maintain them in a sound economic position.

3) Those families in which the economic position in the average year is insufficient, even when income from land and outside labour are both considered, to maintain them in a sound economic position.

The investigation found 10 families in the first class, 12 in the second and 125 in the third. It thus appeared that out of 147 families investigated only 22 or just under 15% could pay their way according to the standard which they themselves had set. The others were living below that standard or increasing their debts.
The incomes and expenditures of these several groups are analyzed as follows:

Group I. The income from the land was Rs 3,149

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{" other sources} \\
\hline
1,507
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{Expenditure personal} \\
\hline
2,128
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{Interest on debt} \\
\hline
210
\end{array}
\]

The reasons tending to raise a family into this class seem to be

(1) The small size of the family.

(2) A large proportion of contributors (30 possibly out of 43) to the family income.

(3) Few debts.

The group consisted of ten families. All were land owners, the average number of members per family was 4.3, and out of a total of 43 persons 30 were adults. The amount of land held by the group was 41 acres or 41 acres per family.

Group II. Income from land Rs 250

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{" labour} \\
\hline
1,213
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{Expenditure personal} \\
\hline
1,179
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{Interest on debt} \\
\hline
66
\end{array}
\]

The total number of families in this group was twelve. They had only 2.1 members per family, and out of a total of 25 persons 19 were adults.

Group III. Income from land Rs 12,403

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{" labour} \\
\hline
5,925
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{Expenditures personal} \\
\hline
26,914
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{Interest on debt} \\
\hline
6,479
\end{array}
\]

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\hline
32,333
\end{array}
\]

38.
The total number of persons was 664, of which 402 were adults and 262 were children. The average number of members per family was 5.3. Their position as regards debt is very bad. 35.5% of their annual income was absorbed in paying interest on debt. But even if there was no debt 80% of the village would still be insolvent in an average year. Thus as the economic position of the family declines, the size of the family increases. Just whether the low economic position tends to cause large families or whether large families cause the low economic position we are unable to say but are inclined to think that it works both ways. At any rate enough has been said to make it clear that large families are an integral part of India's economic problem. And were it not for the presence of plagues, famines and innumerable other destructive forces the contrast would be more glaring. As war upon these destructive forces becomes more effective, the problem of over-population will certainly demand attention. Thus instead of being able to pay off their already accumulated debt, many families, must either starve or increase their indebtedness year by year.

Our business is to show the relation of religious beliefs and practices to this all-important matter. In India there is not as yet a question of birth control but first of all a problem of retarding positive forces consciously practiced for birth increase. "May you be the mother of seven sons" is the blessing often invoked on the wives of India, and the great desire of every woman's heart. A Brahman marriage ceremony lasts several days. The high caste husband annoints his bride and himself, reciting verses and liturgies. She ascends the mill-stone, descends from
it and takes seven steps to the North East. At last after tedious hours of ritual, when in the night sky the bride sees the polar star and the seven Rishis, she breaks her long silence and says, "May my husband live and may I bear children." The Tulasi plant is the Hindu woman's especial divinity. It is generally planted in the courtyard of respectable families, with a space around it for circumambulation. All the religion of many of the women consists in walking round the Tulasi plant, in saying prayers to it or in placing offerings before it, the object of which is to have sons. They walk 108 times around it, with the right shoulder always turned toward it; if the left shoulder were used all the efficacy would be lost. There are different stories of its supposed origin. One account says that it was produced at the churning of the Milk sea. Another version says that a woman named Tulasi sought, by long religious austerities, to become the wife of Vishnu. Lakshmi, hearing of this, cursed her and changed her into a plant which bears her name and so is worshiped as a deity. The following prayer is often addressed to it: "I adore that Tulasi in whose roots are all the sacred places of pilgrimage, in whose center are all the deities and whose upper branches are all the Vedas."

All this concern for children springs from a conviction which lies at the basis of Indian family life, namely: that the ancestors are dependent on their children for nourishment in the other world. And only a son can with due ceremony make the offerings of rice and water on which the ancestor depends for this nourishment. A childless man who has no son to make offerings for him is said to fall into the hell called Put. Putra, a son, is supposed to mean one who saves from Hell. To get sons to make offerings necessitates marriage. The general idea is that the dead require to be nourished.
for three generations by their descendants, and to have works of merit performed for their benefit. Professor Bhattacharjya says, "Ancestor worship, in some form or other, is the beginning, the middle, and the end of what is known as the Hindu Religion."

The first object of the Hindu Shraddha is to provide the departed spirit with an intermediate body which converts the spirit from a preta (ghost) into a pitri or ancestor. The Pinda (ball of rice) offered on the first day nourishes the spirit in such a way as to furnish it with a head; on the second day, the pinda gives it a neck and shoulders, and so on. By the tenth day the intermediate body is sufficiently formed to feel the sensation of hunger. On the eleventh and twelfth days it feeds voraciously on the offerings and so gains strength on the thirteenth day for its terrible journey to Yama. But by performing certain religious rites and giving gifts to Brahmans, all the terrific penalties of sin may be avoided, and Yama loses its victims. The Brahmans are held for the time to represent the pitris, and whatever nourishes and benefits the Brahmans nourishes and benefits the pitris. And in order to enhance the effect to the ceremony the idea has also grown that the offerers store up merit for themselves as well as their ancestors. Not only is there a dwelling ordained in hell for the man who has no sons to offer shraddha but these ancestors whether good or bad spirits in the other world are very powerful and can do much mischief to the living, if not properly represented and treated; hence the great expenditure of money for funeral ceremonies and hence the great desire for sons to perform the ceremonies, not simply one but several, in case accident or death should take away the eldest or even sometimes the second eldest boy. And thus so long as such a belief remains dominant in the Hindu community will the question of child marriage, woman's degradation and the relation of population to land be paramount problems.  

1. Tazore Law Lectures P. 30
Chapter III
EDUCATION

It has been the fashion, as exemplified by Mr. Kipling, to consider Indian mentality and Western thinking as incommensurate. The Hindu has been exalted for his ability for abstruse and lofty thought. H. G. Wells places Asoka with the ten greatest men in Raman history. Chandi is commonly counted one of the three or four really outstanding personalities of this century. Sir Jagadis Chandra Bose’s resonant recorder which can register measures of time as short as one thousandth of a second. Dr. Rabindranath Tagore is Nobel prizeman in literature. Pandita Ramabi is listed as one of a dozen most influential women in a century of growing womanly influence. All these names and others that could be mentioned seem to lend color to the notion that the people of India are naturally intelligent. While there is perhaps some truth in the notion, yet on the other hand much is certainly to be found in the intellectual life of India today which is comparable with the mysticism and Scholastic philosophy of the European Middle Ages, rather than with the present day traits of Western peoples.

The people of India have remained stationary in civilization for centuries. Their intellect has in some respects been dwarfed into childhood, which delights only in the marvellous and monstrous. "The greatest self-contradictions, the wildest tales," says Murdoch, "do not awake their common sense." Learned men and philosophers accept the stories of the Puranas equally with the vulgar. Visvanatha Paunchanan, one of the great doctors of the Nyaya Philosophy, begins the Bhasha Parichohada, the text book of Nuktavali, with

1. Dutcher "Political Awakening of the East" P. 67
2."Hinduism" P. 74
the following description of God: "Salutation to that Chrishna, whose appearance is like a new cloud, the stealer of the clothes of the Gopis, who is the seed of the tree of the Universe."

Illiteracy is an outstanding fact in India. Out of a population of 320,000,000 only about 18,000,000 can read or write. Government schools are placed in about one fifth of the villages and even then over 80% of the children in those villages receive no education at all. There are thousands of villages in which no one takes a vernacular newspaper. These old world communities are little affected by the movements of city folks. They know nothing of popular representation, ballot boxes, legislative councils, national congresses, or other matters in which the lawyers and journalists delight. They have a very moderate good will for the village school, to the enrollment of which they contribute, under considerable pressure, a small percentage of their children. Their enthusiasm is reserved for the new temple with its fourhanded figure of Vishnu which some wealthy grain dealer is erecting, as a thank offering for a son or for the delights of an annual pilgrimage to a sacred pool where the footprint of a god is clearly stamped on a rock. There are now nearly four million boys attending elementary schools, leaving ten or twelve million boys to be accounted for. The girl population of India is practically uneducated. Rural India stoutly disbelieves in education. Even if there were money and teachers enough to provide schools in every village, the inclination of the people to make use of them would still have to be created. In the existing schools there are many vacant places solely because the peasant prefers to keep his son at home, and dreads the effects of books on their habits and character. Even in British India very few of the Panchama class attend even the Government schools. Out of 8,157 schools in the Madras Presidency there were children from the Panchama class
in only 609 of them. The census report for the state of Hyderabad with a population of around 13,000,000 shows that in 1911 there were only two boys who passed the High School examination. In 1921 there were 192 passes, and only 365,000 in the entire dominions were recorded as literate, in the sense that they could read and answer a letter from a friend in their own vernacular.

When we realize that the majority of the children in the primary schools receive only three or four years schooling, and four out of five of them spend most of that period in the lowest class, we can more readily understand that about 39% of those who do achieve the literacy of the very elementary kind demanded for census purposes very soon lose it through failure to continue or through lack of follow up measures. According to the census of 1921 there were 1,225 women undergoing instruction in the colleges of India, of whom 468 were Indian Christians. In High Schools there were 18,686 girls, of whom 5,778 were Indian Christians. In Middle Schools there were 24,101 girls, of whom 8,038 were Indian Christians. In the lower primary Schools there were 1,182,374 girls, of whom 76,335 were Indian Christians. In the proportion of their girls being educated, Indian Christians stand next to the Europeans and Anglo-Indians. When we add to this the fact that a large percentage of the children in mission schools are non-Christian we see that outside of the Christian community very little is being done for the girls of India in the way of education. The following percentage of the population enrolled in the elementary schools of various countries (Progress of education in India, 1912-17 p4) will indicate to some extent how far India is behind in the race:

44.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>19.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England and Wales</td>
<td>16.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German Empire</td>
<td>16.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>15.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>13.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ceylon</td>
<td>9.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>8.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>3.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>2.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In our search for an explanation of this apparent backwardness, educationally, of the Indian People, a visit to an ordinary village school affords many helpful suggestions. Fred B. Fisher says, "School suggests a great bare room, with dozens of little figures squatting solemnly on the floor, swaying back and forth to the rhythm of a sing song drone as they memorize page after page of the sayings of Confucious, Mahammed, etc. The school building is usually plain, sometimes stone, sometimes a tumble of mud walls and grass thatch and sometimes it is just the space under the shade of a big tree. The floor is strewn with sand which the children use as a big slate, learning to trace letters in it with little brown fingers. The master goes through the lesson with each boy separately. As one boy reads aloud others do their arithmetic aloud and still others recite poetry." A boy has completed his education when he can read or write anything accurately on a plantain leaf and knows a little arithmetic, which achievements usually require about four or five years. A very good description of an Indian village school is given by F. B. Pandian in His Indian Village folk. He himself, being an Indian, speaks from first hand experience. He says, "The boys get up very early in the morning and get to school by four or five o'clock without washing their faces or taking their morning meal, they must however have the marks of the sacred ash upon their foreheads as a token of their devotion to the god Siva. The teacher himself comes about six o'clock, drills the boys for about two hours and then lets them go home for their morning meal; they come back

1. India’s Silent Revolution
about nine and stay till twelve when they go home for their noontide meal, they meet again at two and finish at six. During the school time they are sent home one by one for drinking water and other domestic reasons. They are supposed to study until eight or nine o'clock at night and bring a chit the next morning to show that they have actually done it. One of the most advanced students is appointed as monitor and he manages the school in the absence of the teacher. While the boys spend about nine hours in the school the teacher spends at most four or five. The monitor is very often cruel and shows much favouritism. He will send his favourite boys after sweetmeats while he makes the others work hard. The teacher is usually a man of very ordinary education, knowing little of the grammar of the language and nothing about history or Geography. He knows nothing of the Red Sea or Atlantic Ocean, but he knows that there are several milk Oceans and fire Oceans and rivers of Honey and Ghee. Some however are fairly good in Arithmetic. The method of instruction is the individual method. Some are reciting poems while others are doing arithmetic or bawling because the teacher twisted his ear, or standing in the corner on one leg, or sitting and standing one hundred times without ceasing, or hanging up by the hands, or starving all day. Some schoolmasters are old and helpless men and the students play all kinds of pranks on them like putting thorns in their mat, etc. A school fee is collected from every boy, or a few measures of grain. When a boy is newly admitted his parents send a present. Before the alphabet is taught the teacher expects an offering of plantains, coconuts, fried rice, or betelnut. These are placed before the god in whose presence the initiation takes place. He will sometimes send the boys with a monitor to sing in the streets and beg vegetables and
presents. He takes an interest in the boys both in school and out. If a boy is sick and refuses to take his medicine, the schoolmaster must come and see that he takes it. If a boy is mischievous and troublesome the schoolmaster must come and administer the punishment."

The subject matter of all Hindu private Schools is entirely religious. Sir Monier Williams shows why every Indian book begins with the formula Sri Ganesaya Namah: "The writing of a book among the Hindus is a very serious and solemn undertaking, peculiarly liable to obstruction from spiteful and jealous spirits of evil, and the favour of Ganesha is invoked to counteract their malignity. It never occurs to any Hindu writer to suppose for a moment that the failure of his literary efforts is ever likely to be due to his own incapacity. In this as in all other enterprises, want of success is attributed, not to want of skill, energy or persistency, but to negligence in taking proper precautions against demoniacal jealousy and obstruction." Ganesa is said to be the son of Siva and Parvati. His large belly denotes his gluttony. Some of the stories of his creation are filthy and all have different accounts of how he lost his head and gained an elephant's head. The boys of South India pray to Ganesha to help them in their studies, and praise him by telling him how much he can eat.

The two epic poems, the Mahabharata and the Ramayana, are the source of most of the Hindus ideas of geography and history, as well as religion. To the masses of India LANKA is still peopled by the demons. All later literature is largely based on these poems, especially the Mahabharata. The latter is not so much a poem with a single subject, as a vast cyclopedia of Hindu mythology, legendary history, ethics and philosophy. There is a

1. Pandian, F. B. "Indian Village Folk
2. In the name of Ganesha i.e. the god of learning
3. Murdoch P.34
saying that what is not in Mahabharata is not in Bharata at all.

The Vishnu Purana (Book II Chap. II) says that the golden mountain Meru is in the center of the earth. Its height is 84,000 yoganas; its depth below the surface of the earth is 16,000 yoganas. Its diameter at the summit is 32,000 yoganas and at its base 16,000.

Around Mount Meru are seven island continents, surrounded by the seven seas of salt water, of sugar cane juice, of wine, of clarified butter, of curds, of milk and of fresh water. There are four mountains as buttresses to Meru, each 10,000 yoganas in height. Each of them has a different kind of tree on its summit 1,100 yoganas in height. From the Jamba tree the Continent of Jambudwipa derives its name. The apples of that tree are as large as Elephants. The depth of the earth below the surface is said to be 70,000 yoganas, each of the seven regions of patalas extending downwards 10,000 yoganas. Below these seven patalas is the form of Vishnu, called shesha, or Anant. Shesha bears the entire world, like a diadem, upon his head. When Ananta rolls his eyes with intoxication and yawns, then the earth with all its forests, mountains, seas and rivers trembles. The Sun is situated 100,000 yoganas from the earth and the moon is an equal distance from the sun. The planet Budha (Mercury) is two lakhs of yoganas above the lunar mansions; Sukra (Venus) is at the same distance from Mercury. The Chariot of the Sun is 9,000 yoganas in length and is drawn by seven horses. The chariot of the moon has three wheels, and is drawn by ten horses of the whiteness of Jasmine. 36,333 deities drink the lunar ambrosia during the light half of the month, while the Pitris are nourished in the dark half. The chariots of the nine planets are fastened to Dhruva, the pole star, by aerial cords.

No wonder Lord Macaulay in 1836 questioned whether it was right at
public expense to countenance "Medical doctrine which would disgrace the English Farrier, astronomy which would move laughter in the girls of the English Boarding School, history abounding with kings thirty feet high and reigns thirty thousand years long, and geography made up of seas of treacle and seas of butter". (Holderness) Sir H. S. Maine describes Hindu thought and literature as "elaborately inaccurate; it is supremely and deliberately careless of all precision in magnitude, number and time". Time is measured by millions of years; space by millions of miles; and if a battle has to be described, nothing is thought of it unless millions of soldiers, elephants, and horses are brought into the field.

One of the main objects in establishing a western brand of education in India, which seems so foreign to what we have just been discussing, was to bring a more scientific point of view to the educational curriculum. And one of the constant dangers in trying to adapt any system to the local conditions is that the Indian teachers immediately fall into the old rut. One of the favorite criticisms of the Western system is that it is not adapted to India's needs. But as a matter of fact we have already said enough to show that India is not over ambitious about any system of education, and today enjoys the reputation of being one of the most illiterate countries in the world. We shall find that there are other obstacles in the way of literacy besides her educational system, uninviting as that is in itself. The reason why the Indian is so conservative and the Anglo-saxon so progressive is not so much a matter of difference of racial inheritance as it is a matter of religious principle. The Hindu is guided more by custom that by reason. When Sir Monier Williams, the Oxford professor of Sanskrit, visited India it was learned that many of the Pandits who called on him took a bath when they returned home in order to remove
the pollution they had contracted in the interview.

According to Hindu religion Brahmans sprang from the mouth of Brahma. And according to the code of Manu, the Brahman, being the first born and the rightful possessor of the Veda, is the chief of all creation. He is mighty god whether he be learned or unlearned. The one great lesson which all the rest of the community must learn is to respect the Brahman Guru. They must learn that it is better to offend the gods than the Guru. If a man offend the gods his Guru can intercede on his behalf and win their favour; but is any one offend the Guru there is none to appease his wrath. The curse of the Guru will condemn a man to untold miseries in hell. Hence it is no uncommon thing when a disciple meets his Guru to prostrate himself before him, and take the very dust from his feet and place it on his head. Some Vishnavas look upon their acharyas as living embodiments of the deity. An ignorant bigoted old man will call himself Jagat guru, the teacher of the world. It is an unpardonable sin to teach the vedas to a Sudra or a low caste man.

There are several reasons why low caste boys do not attend even the free government schools:

(1) Prejudice on the part of the high caste people
(2) The location of the school in Brahman quarters
(3) Objections from the owners of the building in which the school is held
(4) Unsympathetic attitude of landlords who need the services of the boys.
(5) The reluctance of the Panchamas themselves
(6) Poverty.

Why is it that outside missionary and other special circles, there is practically no female education? Again we find popular prejudice against it firmly entrenched in the institutions of caste and early marriage, in the Purdah system and in the Oriental view of the mission of women.
The traditional duty of the Indian woman is to be a wife and look after the household; and it is thought that for this education will spoil her. Spiritually, woman belongs to an inferior order. It is because of sin in a former life that she has been born a woman. Therefore, even though she be of Brahman caste, she may not hear the Vedas recited, and she may not eat with her husband—he is her god. The Laws of Manu (Chap. VIII, p. 299) says, "A wife who has committed faults may be beaten with a rope, or a split bamboo". This belief has led not only to general neglect of women's education but also to widespread female infanticide, now kept in check by the ever watchful eye of the British Government. Another requirement of the sacred law is that a girl shall be married before puberty. Motherhood quickly follows puberty. A recent census report tells the story of 335,000 widows under fifteen years of age, of whom 17,700 were not even five years old and 1,014 less than one year old. A widow is forbidden to remarry. She must live a life of severe austerity, generally as a household drudge. This system of child marriage makes education almost impossible for Indian women, since the little girls who must assume all the responsibilities of womanhood at eight and ten years of age are too preoccupied to be apt scholars. The girls and women in a cultivator's household have by no means an easy life. They rise early in the morning, sprinkle cowdung over the outer and inner yards, clean the cooking vessels, bring home water for the family use, cook the meals for the men and enjoy whatever is left, pound rice, grind curries, go out and cut grass from embankments to feed the cattle, make cowdung into cakes for fuel, attend to the family worship, and perform any services their mothers-in-law may require, all of which so engage her time and energy that there remains no place for an educational program as we understand that term in western lands.
Thus Hinduism gives a man his social standing in the community, guarantees a man his occupation, assures a man a wife, and so regulates his every act that education loses a good deal of its driving power, which makes it a necessity in the West. Even the poverty of the outcaste and the degradation of women, which make universal education practically impossible, are also products of the religious beliefs and practices of the people.
Chapter IV

HEALTH

In India the wastage of life is great, especially child and infant life. Diseases which in the West have given way before medical and sanitary science, improved dwellings, and better habits of life, still stalk abroad in India. Cholera, smallpox, and malaria fever together destroy lives by the millions, and yet the great majority of the Indian people die without medical aid. The influenza epidemic in 1918 accounted for 7,000,000 deaths, over and above the usual annual havoc of 7,500,000. About one baby in every four dies within twelve months after its birth. A medical examination of several jails showed that 85% of the inmates had hookworm. Dr. Bentley after examining 600 coolies working in the tea gardens of Assam found only one who did not have hookworm. Four and one half million out of the annual deaths from epidemics are caused by malaria fever. But besides this astounding number of deaths it is estimated that there are at least one hundred attacks to every death. This is said accounts for 200,000 days of sickness per year in Bengal alone.

It increases the death rate, lowers the birth rate, induces poverty, and accounts to a large extent for the constant lack of energy. Fourteen out of every ten thousand are blind. Fifty one males and eighteen females in every hundred thousand are lepers according to census reports. The Hyderabad State alone shows a decrease in its population during the last decade of over 1,000,000 out of a total population of 13,000,000.

At first sight the improvement of the health situation in an Indian village may seem a simple matter compared with the complicated case of the cities. The water supply, whether for drinking or for irrigation, is obtained from rivers, Nalas or wells. It should not be surprising that a river containing very little
water in the dry season, and passing by a good many villages on its course, should often be contaminated. But it is not merely a question of drainage or water supply, but one of a radical change in the general standard of living and in the habits and prejudices of centuries. The money difficulty alone is formidable, but the social and political difficulty is greater.

Nothing is more unpopular with the masses than sanitary reform, and evidently without the co-operation of the people rural India can make little headway in this matter. They may once in a while submit to vaccination because it is prescribed; but they have much greater faith in the efficacy of oblations to the goddess of smallpox, the more especially since sanitary reform on its legal side is connected with taxes, fines and inspections, and on its ethical side involves breaches of caste laws and disrespect for tradition. Caste rules may forbid them to kill plague-infected rats in their houses, or require them to use a polluted well. It has been proved beyond all doubt that the malaria fevers which afflict the wealthiest quarter of the city of Bombay and are sapping the vitality of the Parsi community could be suppressed if the wells, in the courtyards of the houses, which serve as breeding places for mosquitoes, were closed. Yet this very necessary and obvious improvement is obstructed because it is contended that the ritual worship of the Hindus and Parsis cannot be properly performed with filtered water from the city mains. As one approaches an Indian village he is struck by the number of pools of stagnant water around the village, especially during and after the Monsoon rains, when all the filth of the year is washed from the banks of the nalas into the deepest holes. In one, the Hadigas tan the hides of the dead animals collected from the surrounding country. On the banks of another the potter treads his clay to make his wares. In another the Dhobi pounds the dirty clothes, in another the people take their morning ablutions, etc.
Above all, as the lowest classes occupy the outskirts and approaches to the village, one is deeply impressed with the undernourished and unsanitary appearance of the men, women, and children, samples of the 70,000,000 continually hungry folk of India. The rags around their loins are dirty, the ribs of their bodies are outstanding, and the women's hair shows little signs of care. "Dishwater, barley pap, cold sour gruel, water in which barley has been washed; such loathsome food the mendicant should never despise". Of all the prohibitions of the Mahavira that of not killing is the most scrupulously observed. The garbage holes of the village are the happy hunting ground of India's 800,000,000 rats. The followers of Mahavira were led to the most grotesque of excesses. Some of them sat for years refusing to stir a limb, or even to breathe deeply, lest thereby they destroy aught of those small insects with which the air of India swarms. They refused to wash their teeth, or cleanse their clothes, or scratch their bodies when the vermin nipped them. To this day they maintain hospitals for animals, caring even for sick snakes and rats and even lice. Only one form of destruction was permitted and that was self-destruction. As death approached, the holy jain might make his one last effort to sunder the chain of transmigration by bravely crushing all desire for sustenance and starving himself to death. Then at last he was free. The Hindus have reached the lowest depths in animal worship. No longer is the cow reverenced for its milk, but now the very excrements of the cow are sacred. Her urine is the best of all holy waters—a sin-destroying liquid which purifies everything it touches. Cow dung is supposed to be of equal efficacy. The ashes produced by burning this hallowed substance are of such holy nature that they have only to be sprinkled over a sinner to convert him into a saint. To swallow a pill

1. Brown "This Believing World" P. 131
composed of the five products of the cow will even purify a man who has been polluted by a visit to England. (Har doch P. 16) A Westerner will be appalled at the great numbers of people with leprosy, smallpox, sore eyes, etc. roaming the public thoroughfares and streets of the villages congregating at Me las, sitting outside the temples, or near the markets and often in them. But to the Indian, who believes that a man suffers in this life because of the way in which he lived in a previous birth, that a man's fate is written upon his forehead by the gods, and his fellow man can do little towards relieving his suffering brother, except as he may store up some religious merit for himself by almsgiving and thus hope to make his next existence in this world a little more tolerable, the whole perspective is different. There can be no harm in the sick man living at home and sharing the house of healthy relatives, even though he must occupy the same room, eating from the same dish, sleeping in the same bed with wife or child, using the common village water supply, using the common implements in the field, or even cooking the food for the family. According to the 1921 Indian Census report, lepers in the Madras presidency included the following: General shopkeepers, 180; grain and pulse merchants, 82; grocers, 52; tobacco sellers, 47; fish dealers, 13; rice pounders, 12; vegetable and fruit sellers, 11; milk and butter and egg dealers, 9; butchers, 5; bakers, 3; hotel keepers, 3; sweetmeat dealers, 2. These are only a few of the occupations entered in the census report, but how many more are working at the same or similar occupations and failed to report would be difficult to guess. The sick man's answer to it all is: "Adi na prapte" (that is my fate).
One of the most serious sources of contagion is directly connected with the performance of religious ceremonies. Sir W. W. Hunter says "Disease and death make havoc of pilgrims. During their stay at Puri they are badly lodged and miserably fed. Pilgrims are told that it is sinful for them to cook themselves. They must buy the food, Mahaprasad, which has been presented to Jagannath. The price is dear, the cooking bad and often it is so old as to be putrid. It is considered to sacred for the least fragment to be thrown away. Hence it is consumed by some one or other, whatever its state of putrefaction, to the very last morsel. It is dangerous to a man of even robust health and deadly to way-worn pilgrims, many of whom reach Puri with some form or other of bowel complaint" (Hunners Criasa). There are two wells at Benares considered specially sacred. One is called Gyan Kup, "Well of knowledge", in which it is believed the god Siva resides. Pilgrims cast into the water cocoanuts and other offerings to the deity below. The mixture produces a constant state of putrefaction, and the stench has become disgusting. The Manikarnika well is even more sacred. The Kashi Kanda says that Vishnu dug this well with his discus, and filled it with the perspiration from his own body. Mahadeva, looking into the well, beheld the beauty of a hundred million of suns. In his joy an earring called Manikarnaka, fell from his ear into the well, which is only two or three feet deep, hence its name. Stone steps on four sides lead down to the well. From the thousands of pilgrims bathing in it, some of them filthy and covered with sores, the water is so stinking that the air is polluted for some distance around. The worshipper descending into the water pours the liquid on his head and body, repeating certain phrases. It is believed that this stinking water will infallibly wash away all the sins of the soul and make it pure and holy.
The physician of the village does not belong to any particular class. There are no schools to prepare young men for the practice of Indian Medicine, consequently the preparation is long and tedious. The mastery of the great works of the eighteen doctors of ancient times is almost a lifelong task. The physician is not a surgeon, since the village barber knows much more about handling a knife than he. Besides being the village hairdresser and musician, he is often called upon to perform the surgical work of the community. His wife, besides her work of shaving the heads of widows, also acts as midwife for the village mothers. In the case of accident the village potter is made use of, since it is his daily task to work with clay, man is made from clay and who else could better understand such cases? Hence the village physician confines his activities to reciting from the sacred books and prescribing medicine. He knows the nature of the disease by feeling the pulse. He does not rely on medicine alone but to the medicine adds some religious ceremony to appease the gods. Among the medicines in use we find copper, iron, gold, quicksilver, mica, pearls and corals, but these are administered only to the rich and noble. There are some fine decoctions made of various herbs, seeds, roots, leaves and bark of trees. Ginger is frequently used for such troubles as diarrhoea, indigestion, rheumatism, cold and fevers. Pepper is used for coughs and for the clearing of the throat. Chilies are a wonderful remedy for pains and swellings. Ointments are made from onions, eggs, frogs, and wild rats. They claim to have remarkably efficient remedies for all kinds of venereal diseases, but leprosy, consumption and lunacy are quite incurable by them. One of their pills is called the pill that sends men into the other world (viganda mattira). As most of the villagers are very poor, the cheapness of the remedy is very important. The quack will demand an extra fee for
driving the spirit out and if the patient dies, no one ever blames the doctor but attributes the fault to the relation's carelessness or the patient's unpromising star. The Government has opened local fund dispensaries in some centers but there still remain thousands of villages at the mercy of the quack. Eyes are operated on with crude knives. Dentists apply paste or steam to aching teeth, and when he extracts, he often pulls the wrong tooth. Branding with hot irons to drive the spirits out is sometimes resorted to, with much consequent suffering and distress.

But there is much more than suffering, pathos and tragedy in the lot of India's diseased ones. The Hindu says the sick man is suffering in this world the penalty for sins in a former birth. The gods have cursed him with his disease and consequently not much can be done. One soon has the feeling upon arriving in India that the prevailing attitude towards the sick is one of neglect. H. S. Holland in his "Goal of India" says:

"Accompanied by my Hindu football team, I was visiting the monastery of an order of ascetics built upon the cliffs that edge the Ganges opposite Allahabad. Squatting on the roof of the topmost room we found a venerable monk, one of whose legs was covered by a revolting sore far advanced in decomposition. His face was aglow with divine serenity. We urged him to go to the dispensary across the river. "Why should I go? if God wishes it He can heal me here". But God has sent a doctor to heal you there and he has given you sense to know that if you stay here much longer you will die. "And why should I not die, if my time has come? But you know the irreligiousness of Allahabad. If you live you can help to bring many to seek after God. "Sahib does God need me to do his work in the hearts of men?"

Unable to get behind the serenity and the hopelessness of this fatalism we moved sadly away."

1. Pandian Indian Village Folk
2. The Goal of India P. 51
But the great mass of people making up the Indian village life are not so reconciled to fate as our ascetic friends seem to be. On the contrary they seem to be overwhelmed by fear. When pestilence is feared demon dances and ceremonies lasting the whole night through are the rule, with the usual result that owing to the added exposure and fatigue the disease spreads the more.

No wonder, then, India is a great land for fortune telling and astrology. Fortune tellers dupe the people young and old, rich and poor. When some one is sick the fortune teller is consulted to find the cause. Though he cannot read or write he has access to a goddess who reveals to him the unknown future. After the sick man or some of his friends bring a present to the fortune teller, he blows a pipe and mutters and blows until he gets some clue. But it is often said that he finds out all about the business of the village from some villager beforehand. For preventive purposes he carries a great number of charms such as cats' tails, tigers' tooth, foxes' heads and peacocks' feathers.

Another expedient often resorted to in the case of sickness is that of pilgrimage. The Ganges, though only twice mentioned in the Vedic Hymns, is now considered the most sacred of all rivers by the Hindus. It is said to flow from the toe of Vishnu. The Agni Purana declares that "those who die when half their body is emersed in Ganges water shall be happy thousands of thousands of ages and resemble Brahma." So when a person is supposed to be dying, he is carried to the Ganges and laid down upon its banks, sometimes surrounded by beings like himself, whose shrieks and groans disturb his repose. A few minutes before his death he is again brought to the brink of the river, when the body is half immersed in water, and Ganges water and mud are poured into his mouth. Sometimes people lie for days on the river bank, unwilling to return home lest their friends would refuse to take them in. It would seem that instead of doing everything to relieve.
the suffering of the dying, everything is done to increase their agony.

And finally, being taught that a violent end purifies the body and insures transmigration into a healthy new existence, the sick like the even more wretched widow has always courted suicide. The old practice for the leper was to dig a deep ditch, pile fire in the bottom and throw the leper on the top. This was due to the superstitious belief, still prevalent in some parts of India, that if a leper suffers himself to be buried alive the disease will not descend to his children.
Chapter V

LEISURE TIME

The people of India are intensely interested in their festivals. One calendar lists some 260 Hindu festivals alone during the year. But Hindus are by no means narrow or partial when it comes to the observance of a Holiday, for they always seem glad to join with Muhammadans, Parsis and even Christians in the observances of theirs. These various celebrations are for the most part the same in different parts of India, though some are peculiar to particular communities. They all have a religious character and religious worship forms part of the celebration. The imagination the multitude always associates the powers of heaven, real or imaginary, with all their transactions. At the principal temples every artifice is used to please the people according to Hindu ideas; there are songs, dancing, fireworks, and other amusements. But no advice is given to the worshippers with regard to moral conduct; on the contrary, immorality seems to be encouraged and prostitutes drive a gainful trade during these times. This emotional excess is due to their unhealthy manner of life. They sometimes seem to be drugged with emotion. Feeling for them takes the place of action with the freer and more vigorous races. The restraint from which they suffer is not only physical but mental also. They are illiterate and without interest in arts or crafts of any kind. Music, for instance, is forbidden them because of its lewd associations with the dancing girl.

One of the chief festivals in Southern India, called Pongal (boiling) is celebrated at the end of the winter solstice. It lasts three
days, during which time the Hindus indulge in mutual visits and compliments, sometimes in the same manner as Europeans do on the first day of the year. The feast of Pongal is a season of rejoicing for two special reasons. The first is that the month of Magha or December, every day in which is unlucky, is about to expire; and the other, that it is to be succeeded by a month, each day of which is fortunate. The first day of this festival is called Bhogi Pongal in honour of Indra, the lord of the season. It is kept by inviting the near relations to an entertainment which passes off with hilarity and mirth. The second day is called Surya Pongal, or Pongal of the Sun. Married women, after purifying themselves by bathing, which they perform by plunging into the water without taking off their clothes and coming out all dripping wet, set about boiling rice in the open air, and not under any cover. They use milk in the operation, and when it begins to simmer, they make a loud cry, all repeating in unison the words "Pongal, O Pongal"; the vessel is then lifted off the fire and set before the idol Ganesha, which is placed close by. Part of the rice is offered to the image; and after standing there for some time it is given to a cow, while the remainder is distributed among the people. This is the great day for visiting among the Hindus. The salutation begins with the question, "Has the milk boiled?" to which the answer is given, "It has boiled". The third day, not less solemn than the proceeding and consecrated with ceremonies still more absurd, and called the Pongal of Cows; in a great vessel filled with water, they put some saffron, cotton seed, and margosa leaves. After mixing the materials well, they go around all the cows and oxen belonging to the house several times, sprinkling them with water and prostrating themselves before them four times. Men only perform this ceremony. The cows are then all dressed out, their horns being painted
in various colours, and garlands of flowers and foliage being strung round their necks and over their backs. They likewise add strings of coconuts and other fruits, which are soon stricken off by the brisk motion of the animal, stimulated by these trappings. These are picked up by the children and others, who follow the cattle for this purpose, and greedily eat what they gather as something sacred. They are then driven, in a herd, through the village, and made to scamper about from side to side by the jarring noise of many sounding instruments. The remainder of the day they are allowed to feed at large without notice or restraint.

Another important festival is called Holi. It is characterized by the singing and shouting of obscene language on the streets. The story is that a she demon called Holi scourged the land, devouring the children, until Krishna delivered the land from this curse, and thus arose the practice of smearing red powder over the body and clothes. A Saiva is said to have told the people that the demon could be destroyed by using obscene language and hence the singing and the shouting. The festival is really a commemoration of Krishna's conduct with the Gopis, which might well be forgotten rather than commemorated. It is almost impossible for a woman to pass through the streets without being insulted by excited crowds. All of this is carried on in the name of religion. At such times we find one man covered with wood ashes standing motionless upside down, another reposing on a bed of spikes, another buried alive with his hands sticking up like bushes, another with burning fire on his chest, another cutting himself with a sword. Veerasalingam describes them piercing their tongues with swords, or having hooks inserted in their backs and being pulled up and down in the air by means of a pulley. This practice, he adds, is forbidden by the British Government.

1. Dubois "Manners and Customs of the People of India" P. 284-6
Wilkins (Modern Hinduism P 224-5) gives the following account of Jatras: "As the jatras form an important part in most of the Hindu festivals, and as they are one of the most important agencies for teaching the people about Hinduism a few words descriptive of them will not be inappropriate. These Jatras come nearer to the old miracle plays of Europe than to anything else with which we are familiar. In front of the platform on which the image is placed is a space railed off for the performers. I have never seen them on a raised platform or stage; but as the front rows of people generally sit down, those standing behind can obtain a grand view of the performance. The actors are men and boys who are in great demand at the Jatra seasons. There is generally a band of music, which plays between the scenes of the Jatra. The performance takes place immediately in front of the idol, although it can hardly be regarded as part of the worship, as it commences after the worship proper is over; yet it is supposed to be as much for the delight of the god as for the amusement of the people who gather to witness it. These plays which begin at eleven o'clock at night and are continued to six or seven o'clock the following morning, give representations of the important parts of the lives of the gods and goddesses of the pantheon, the amours and amusements of Krishna, the quarrel of Siva and Parvati, and the life of Rama and Sita being the most common. The actors are dressed and painted in imitation of the deities they represent, and frequently their conversations are rendered attractive by sensual and obscene allusions; whilst in the interludes boys dressed in women's clothes, dance with most indecent gestures. The worst dances that I have seen have been in front of an image, and as part of the rejoicings of a religious festival. Crowds of men, women and children sit to watch them the whole night through, and
certainly their theatrical representations of the acts and words of the deities form a most successful method of teaching the people the most memorable events of their lives. The words and dress of the actors being all according to the teachings of the Sastras there can be no doubt that they exert an immense influence over the people. Lessons taught in this manner are not easily forgotten."

Another important place in the leisure time activities of the village must be given to the Poet. India is famous for its poets. The innumerable medical works are all written in verse. The descriptive accounts of the laws of the Kings with their commentaries are poetical works. The great books of ethics and the teaching of the Vedanta philosophy are also classed as poetry. The beggar begs while playing on his harp. The children are taught to read and write in poetry. Every village has its own poet. If the poet is in want of a meal he writes a poem on some villager who in return usually supplies the temporary relief needed. But there is a special gift in stores when, during the long summer nights, he is called upon to expound the great works of Ramayana and Mahabharata. He will start about eight o'clock at night and keep on to two or three o'clock in the morning, reciting the wonderful exploits of Rama and the other Heroes. It sometimes takes six months to finish these great Epics. Towards this even the villagers contribute each a certain sum and present it to the poet upon the completion of the task. These poets have a song at their command for every conceivable thing and on every imaginable occasion. The songs are sometimes full of witty anecdotes and sayings. They know very little of the grammar of their language. Their imagination runs riot. They will compare a woman's forehead to a new moon, and her arms to the loftiest heights of the Himalaya mountains. When they curse a man they say, "May you

1. Murdoch "Hindu Festivals" P. 52
contract a loathsome disease and your cattle and wife become barren. They are on this account held in awe by the villagers and every precaution is taken not to offend them. The Hindu Zamindars and Rajas have their own poets, and they will often set apart a few acres of land for their use free of rent. The poets may be called the great reciters and composers of religious lore and interpreters of the same to the community during the leisure seasons.

Movies have not yet penetrated past the cities. Villages are often so widely scattered that even wandering jugglers and sword swallowers rarely reach them, but when they do, it is a great occasion. Permission to hold the show is secured from the headman, and the time and place are arranged. A drum is beaten and the people come running. The seat of honor is given to the headman, the elders of the village are seated on the front rows, and the women crowd together in a group at the back, where they usually remain standing. The chief juggler makes a speech something like the following: "This is a wonderful show we are about to put on. Just yesterday we put it on in such and such a village and the people gave us silk cloth and rich jewels. But they are not so rich and generous as this village, whose headman and people are renowned for their generosity throughout the country." Then follows a program something like the following:

1. Somersaults
2. A man throws up a coconut in the air, pretends to let it fall on his head, but gets scared and slips aside. After some encouragement from the headman, he throws it up again, straightens up and lets the coconut fall on the crown of his head, when it breaks in pieces.
3. Two boys join in a cart wheel stunt.
4. The mango trick. A seed is planted, covered with a basket, watered, and in a few minutes a tree grows up.
(5) Men stand on each others' heads, head to head, and feet to feet, two, three or four men piling up in the air.

(6) A man throws a cannon ball in the air, lets it fall on his back, and so swings his body that the ball rolls out on his arms and back.

(7) A block of stone about three feet long and nine inches thick is tied to a man's hair, and he swings around so fast that the stone becomes unseen to the naked eye.

(8) The famous disappearance scene usually ends the program. A woman is put in a basket, swords pierced through it, and after a while the woman comes from around some corner.

(9) The final act is the giving of presents.

Oftentimes the main diversions of a village will be limited to marriages and funerals. Both of these are made a great occasion. Wedding ceremonies last several days as a rule, and so also do the ceremonies immediately following a person's death. Both of these occasions, we have already seen, are very expensive, often entailing lifelong debts. House parties are a rarer thing and, owing to the complete segregation, in the higher castes, of the Hindu wife from her husband's social life, a large gap is left for the nautch and dancing girl. A high caste Hindu woman of an orthodox circle never appears when her husband entertains in his own home. And so, as a group of men cannot entertain themselves indefinitely with eating and drinking, the custom has arisen of bringing dancing girls into private houses for practically all parties. Formerly they took part at marriages and all other ceremonies, and, as a mark of respect, accompanied prominent men on formal and state calls. The British Governor of Madras in the early nineties
official who refused to attend parties where mauch girls appeared, a precedent which is now generally accepted and producing a wholesome effect.
Hinduism contains some great truths more or less clearly expressed. Moral precepts of a high order may also be culled from some of its sacred books. Some of the passages are considered perfect gems. But the confession has also to be made that the Hindu sacred books likewise contain much that is erroneous and calculated to have a most prejudical effect in every way, intellectually, socially, morally and religiously. For instance, while the excellencies of the code of Manu should be acknowledged it should also be added that it contains much that is foolish, untrue, and unjust. The punishments to our way of looking at things are in some cases very slight while in others they are dreadfully cruel. A childless man who has no son to make offerings for him is said to fall into the hell called PUT. This is evidently a device of the Brahmins to get Shradhas. For stealing more than fifty pallas, cutting off the hand is enjoined (VIII 322). The fact that theft may be the result of poverty or that cutting off a man's hand simply makes it impossible for him to make an honest living in the future is not taken into consideration. Although truthfulness, in the abstract, is commanded and lying condemned, the code of Manu, like many other Hindu works, sanctions false oaths even on trifling occasions—in sacrificial fuel, or to favor a Brahman. There is no sin in a false oath on such occasions. (VII 112). Women are ordained to be depraved. Manu allots to her a love of bed, a seat, ornaments, impure desires, wrath, dishonesty, malice and bad conduct. (IX 17) The first three implies love of sleep, laziness and vanity. No sacrifice or other religious rite is allowed to woman apart from her husband. Only so far as the wife honours her lord will she be exalted in Heaven. (VI 55) Women, being
ignorant of Vedic texts, are foul as falsehood itself; this is a fixed rule. (IX 18)

Of the influences which have moulded the character of the Hindus, the most powerful have probably been the two epic poems, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata already referred to. The Mahabharata teaches some important lessons, such as the fatal consequences of disunion, the and effects of neglecting the proper training of children, the evils of gambling, and adherence to duty. On the other hand it is full of gross exaggerations; the sanctity of the cow, depravity of women, paltering with truth, treachery, false promises, and degrading ideas of God are taught and glorified. In the Adi Parwa, Kanika, prime minister of Dhritarashtra, gives the following advice: "When thy foe is in thy power, destroy him by every means, open or secret. Do not show him mercy although he seeketh thy protection. Then thou art engaged in doing even a very cruel and terrible act, thou shalt talk with smiles on thy lips". The Mahabharata shows vividly the ideas of morality and religion which prevailed at the time. Hindu Kings were despots, and could do as they pleased. The same license was extended to the gods. As kings multiplied their wives and concubines, so Krishna, to denote his greatness, is represented as having eight queens, 16,000 wives, and 180,000 sons. His sporting with his wives at Prabhasa and afterwards taking part in the slaughter of his sons were not considered unworthy of his character as a god.

The Puranas must be carefully distinguished from the epic poems. The poems are the legendary histories of heroic men before they were actually deified, whereas the Puranas are properly the history of the same heroes converted into positive gods, and given the highest position in the Hindu Pantheon. The Puranas were written for the express purpose of exalting one

1. See Murdoch: "The Religion of the World" P.63
deity or the other to the highest position. The works called Tantaras represent the latest and most corrupt form of Hinduism. The religious doctrines of some of them are perhaps the most degraded to be found anywhere. An exclusive adoration of Siva's wife is inculcated as the source of every kind of supernatural power. This is believed to be a direct revelation from Siva to his wife Parvati. Those who worship energy or force as a female deity are called Saktas. It is by offering to women the so-called homage of sensual love and carnal passion, and by yielding free rein to all the grosser appetites, that the Saktas hope to gratify the goddess and, through her aid, to acquire supernatural faculties and even ultimately to obtain union with the supreme being. Passion is poison but the only antidote for this poison is more poison. Therefore it is reasoned that only indulgence in the five vices, that poison, the soul of man, wine, meat, fish, mystical gesticulations with the fingers, and sex looseness, can drive these poisons out of their system and really purify the soul.

It was Verrasaligam's contention that no people will ever rise higher ethically than their own conception of the ethics of the god they worshipped. The Hindu trinity is composed of the three gods, Brahma, the creator, Vishnu the perserver, and Siva the destroyer. The Mahabharata asserts that Brahma sprang from a lotus which grew on the navel of Vishnu. He is represented with four heads whose origin is thus explained: "Beholding his daughter Satarupa, he lusted after her, when she tried to escape four heads were formed to look after her. When she sprang into the sky, a fifth head was immediately formed. Siva is afterwards said to have cut off the fifth head with the nail of his left hand. He was given to intoxication. Thrice he told a lie and hired the cow Kamadhenu and the tree Kataki as false witnesses. Dr. Farquhar in his

1. Murdock, "Hinduism" P. 26 "Religion" P. 79
Crown of Hinduism (P.395) writes: "Had there been one gust of pure moral air blown from Brahma (the monistic that) these unworthy stories of the gods with their lusts and quarrels, their facile nymphs sent to draw ascetics into sin, their adultery and incest, their shameful fears and terrors, their spite and lies and revenges, would have been banished into oblivion!" Of the three supreme gods, Shiva has the most followers. He is conceived to be a wild morose deity, malevolent and destructive, causing pestilence and storms and all manner of other horrors. The masses love him because he was much after their own kind, passionate, violent and licentious. He wife Parvati is even a greater favourite. To her glory the thugs, a secret sect of pious murderers, used to commit unspeakable outrages; and in her name the tantrists, a secret sect of pious perverts, still indulge in indescribable sex orgies. There is hardly a village in all India today where there is not at least one shrine sheltering the emblem of Siva—an upright cylindrical block usually resting on a circular slab with a hole in its center. Curiously the people do not seem to realize the crude symbolism of that emblem, and do not even remotely associate it with sex. Many of them even wear it around their necks for good luck, or as a sign of their religious devotion. As lord of demons and dancers, Siva haunts cemeteries, wearing serpents around his head and skulls for a necklace, and attended by a troupe of imps. Siva's wife, Parvati, is said often to have rebuked him for his evil habits and associating with prostitutes. She was almost ruined by his habits of intoxication, in which he indulged to such a degree as to redden his eyes. He danced naked before Atri, and from the curse of that Rishi was punished in a way which is too shameful to be mentioned. He was ready to part with all the merit he had.

1. Browne "This Believing World) P. 157
acquired from his austerities in order to gratify his evil desires but once with Mohini.

It will perhaps be more easy to understand some of the attitudes of a community toward morality if we first know something regarding the ideals of their religious leaders. Like priest, like people, is particularly true of the Indian Village. Manu says that to smite a Brahmin purposely even with a blade of grass will cause a man to be born in twenty-one transmigrations from the womb of impure animals. But whatever crimes a Brahman may have committed, the king must on no account put him to death; he may at the most banish him, allowing him to take all his property with him. The dust of the brahman's foot placed on a man's head frees him from all sin. Another way of obtaining the same object is to drink the water into which a Brahman has dipped the great toe of his right foot. "All holy streams of the world go to the Ocean; all the holy streams in the ocean are in a Brahman's right foot."

The depth of debasement is reached in the case of the Vallabah sect, a division of the Vaishnavas. Their chief priests, called Maharajas, are regarded as incarnations of Krishna. Men and women prostrate themselves at their feet, offering them incense, fruit and flowers, and waving lights before them. It is believed that the best way of propitiating Krishna in Heaven is by ministering to the sensual appetites of the Maharajas. Body, soul and property are to be made wholly over to them. Woman are taught to believe that the highest bliss will be secured to themselves and their families by intercourse with the Maharajas. Rich Bombay merchants, as shown at a court trial, gave their wives and daughters to be prostituted, as an act of religious merit, to men who had ruined their health by debauchery.
The Saiva beggars are dirty and disgusting. Some of them wander about quite naked. Though strong and able to work, they live in idleness, praying upon the industrious. If anyone should refuse the alms requested they would be threatened with the most awful curses. They stupify themselves with Bhang, and are guilty of the vilest immoralities. That such men should be regarded as holy, is sad proof of the debasing influence of Hinduism, the supporting of concubines in the homes of the priests, and public prostitution in connection with the Hindu temples. The dancing girls of the Temple are openly dedicated to prostitution. They are supposed to sweep the temple, sing and dance at festivals, fan the idols, and act as bridesmaids at weddings. Even the most sacred of ceremonies performed in connection with the burial of the dead is turned by the cunning priests to their own mercenary ends, their sole object being to extort all they can from the bereaved relations.

The effect of all this on the moral practices of the community can readily be imagined. In the Bagavat Gita, Krishna is represented as saying, "The mind by continually meditating on a material object becomes materialized". As is the god, so is the worshipper; men become assimilated to the objects they worship. Instead of trying to forget the conduct of Krishna with the Gopis, it is commemorated by a great Festival, where people run about in excited crowds throwing red powder on the passers-by and singing indecent songs. It is almost impossible for a woman to pass through the streets on such occasions without being insulted. Yet all is done in the name of religion; in fact, it would seem that obscenity is the measure of piety. Ram Mohan Roy says regarding idolatry: "Idolatry, as now practiced by our countrymen, must be looked upon with great horror by common sense, as 1. Murdoch's "Hinduism" P. 35
leading directly to immorality and destructive of social comforts. For every Hindu who devotes himself to this absurd worship, constructs for that purpose a couple of male and female Idols, sometimes indecent in form, as representative of his favourite deities; he is taught and enjoined from his infancy to contemplate and repeat the history of these, as well as their debauchery, sensuality, falsehood, ingratitude, breach of trust and treachery to friends. There can be but one opinion regarding the moral character to be expected of a person who has been brought up with sentiments of reverence for such beings, who refreshes his memory relative to them every day, and who has been persuaded to believe, that the repetition of the holy name of one of these deities, or a trifling present to his image or to his devotees, is sufficient not only to purify and free him from all crime, but to procure to him future beatitude." Lord Ronaldshay tells of examining a young Bengali on a charge of murder, but only to find the young man brush all responsibility for the affair entirely aside with the remark that he hoped in the next birth he wouldn't be born a Bengali. In speaking of the temples of South India, Dubois says: "Next to the sacrificers, the most important persons about the temples are the dancing girls, who call themselves Devadasi,—servants of the gods. Their profession requires of them to be open to the embraces of all persons of all castes." They are bred to this profligate life from infancy. They are taken from any caste, and are frequently of respectable birth. It is nothing uncommon to hear of a pregnant woman, in the belief that it will tend to their happy delivery, making a vow, with the consent of her husband, to devote the child then in the womb, if it should turn out to be a girl, to the service of the pagoda. And in doing so they imagine they are performing a meritorious duty. The infamous life to which the daughter is destined

1. Mardo "Hinduism" P. 42
brings no disgrace on the family. Women scour the country and adopt or buy little girls to bring them up to this infamous life.

The rites of the Vamachar is are most debasing. The securing of absorptions by the extinction of desire is considered to be the grand Hindu aim. The Vamachar is seem to arrive at it by gratifying desire. They drink spirits, eat flesh and fish, and indulge their lust as a means to the highest form of salvation—complete union with the supreme being.

No wonder, then, that the census for 1911 reveals the fact that one out of every sixteen adult Indian women in Calcutta was a prostitute. And Fisher adds that in Bengal the small country town which has not its row of houses of ill fame would be hard to find. The outstanding difference between immoral practices in India and those in so called Christian lands is that in India religion consecrates evil and enshrines it in the very heart of its theology and devotional practices. Washing in the Ganges, says one, "Is like putting dirty clothes in a box and then rubbing the outside of the box." Many men go from the river every morning to their shops, to lie and defraud their customers. A great number of abandoned characters living on the very banks of the Ganges and daily perform their ablutions in its sacred stream. The Gangaputras at Benares are notorious for their lying and rapacity.

In order to realize how it has been possible for the Hindu to admit such things as unlimited idolatry, human sacrifice, cruel torture, temple prostitution, and obscene sculpture; and explain why he does not regard it as unbecoming for Vali to act as a patron divinity for robbers and murderers we must remember that there was no definite conception in the Hindu mind as to what a god must be. Moral character was in no sense a part even of the vedic conception of God. Brahma may be thought of as reality, intelligence and joy but not as righteousness. The doctrine of transmigration suggests that a man's moral and spiritual state is scarcely under his own control, since it
is the result of his past life. And since a man will have many more lives, there will be plenty of opportunity for repentance in some future life.

Asceticism has the tendency to cut off a man's religious practices from his every day life. A man can conscientiously pray to God at the temple and pray on his neighbours in his workshop. The Vedic conception of God is not likely to lead an ascetic to be the servant of humanity.

And yet there is much that is beautiful in family life, despite its many blots. The Hindu is charitable, peaceful and law-abiding. "He honours religion and believes no nation can be built without it. Thus Hindu morality, as found in the best books and in the life of orthodox families, has many high qualities. The modern Hindu who has drunk of western thought in Indian or European universities also maintains that Hindu morality has a solid spiritual basis in Hindu philosophy; that from that starting point man's moral relation to God and his complete responsibility to God may be clearly worked out." Dr. Farquhar adds "this is strange, if it be true; for it is certain no one attempted to find such things in Hindu philosophy until Christian thought appeared in India." Even assuming that it true that educated Hindus can find such a moral basis in Hindu philosophy, we will still have, for our purpose, the difficult task of finding these young philosophers in residence in the ordinary Indian village.

And yet, as we shall find in the following chapter, in these modern days, the widened experience, the new knowledge and the fresh moral ideas which have come from contact with Western government and education and from the impact of the world's commerce on the economic life of India, all make for a reconstruction of Indian thought and ideals. A new ethical atmosphere is developing which ultimately will generate new conceptions of God, man, morality, religion and the whole meaning of the world.

1. Farquhar "Crown of Hinduism" P. 397
2. " "Primer of Hinduism" P. 165
Chapter VII

POLITICS.

The impulse which first drove the British into India was not conquest but trade. The Government of India as it is today is the product of a slow evolution from conditions established to meet trading requirements. After the mutiny, there was passed in 1858 an Act transferring the Government of India from the East Indian Company to the Crown. This Act made no important change in the administration in India, but the Governor-General, as representing the Crown, became known as the Viceroy. The Viceroy is the sole representative of the Crown in India; he is assisted by a council, composed of high officials, each of whom is responsible for a special department of the administration.

The functions of the Government in India are perhaps the most extensive of any great administration in the world. It claims a share in the produce of the land and in the Punjab and Bombay it has restricted the alienation of land from agriculturists to non-agriculturists. It undertakes the management of landed estates where the proprietor is disqualified. In times of famine it undertakes relief work and other remedial measures on a great scale. It manages a vast forest property and is the principal manufacturer of salt and opium. It owns the bulk of the railways of the country, and directly manages a considerable portion of them; it has constructed and maintains most of the important irrigation works; it owns and manages the post and telegraph systems; it has the monopoly of the note issue, and it alone can set the mints in motion. It lends money to municipalities, rural boards, and agriculturists and occasionally to owners of historic estates. It controls the sale of liquor and intoxicating drugs and has direct res-
ponsibility in respect to police, education; medical and sanitary operations and ordinary public works of the most intimate character. The Government has also close relations with the Indian States which collectively cover more than one-third of the whole area of India and comprise more than one-fifth of its population. The distribution of these great functions between the Government of India and the provincial administrations has fluctuated and was definitely regulated by the reform act of 1919.

British India for administrative purposes is divided into fifteen provinces, each with a separate local government. In nine of the provinces the Local Government consists of a Governor, an Executive Council of not more than four members, and two or more Ministers. The remaining six Provinces are directly administered by chief commissioners, who are technically mere agents of the Central Government of India. Part of the members of the Provincial councils are elected and part nominated by the Government.

Throughout the greater part of India, the Village constitutes the primary territorial unit of Government organization, and from the villages are built up the larger administrative entities—tahsils, sub-divisions, and districts.

The typical Indian village has its central residential site, with an open space for a pond and a cattle stand. Stretching around this nucleus lie the village lands, consisting of a cultivated area and very often grounds for grazing and wood cutting. The inhabitants of such a village pass their lives in the midst of these simple surroundings, welded together in a little community with its own organization and government, which differ in character in the various types of villages, its body of detailed customary rules, and

1. "The Indian Year Book" 1924 P. 16
its little staff of functionaries, artisans and traders.

The principal village functionaries are the headman, the accountant and the village watchman.

We will allow Mr. Pandian himself, an Indian of some standing to give his picture of village politics. "The office of village Munsif may be compared to that of a mayor, he is not elected by the people but appointed by the Government and paid a monthly salary of Rupees five to twelve. His office is hereditary and confers upon him magisterial and judicial power. As a magistrate he punishes persons for petty assaults and offences. As a judge he tries suits for sums of money, or other personal property up to the sum of ten Rupees. They are for the most part ignorant men who do not understand justice or the law of the land. He is an unnecessary evil and ought to be disposed. The hereditary nature of the office ought certainly to be abolished. He often abuses his authority and becomes a great source of discomfort and trouble to the villagers. Cirmees are hushed by receiving bribes, innocent people are sentenced to rigorous imprisonment and hanged by the neck. By the assertion of his authority he gets his daily malk from one person, pulse, grain and vegetables from another, lambs and rams from some poor shepherd, and even firewood from a poor Parish, and even makes the poor villagers plough and work in his fields as a tribute to his honour". In almost every village disputes are settled by the Panchayat. Villagers have settled disputes for centuries in these courts. The Panchayat consists of five members elected by the people. They may belong to any class save the lowest order. They receive no payment at all from the villagers but are generally men of position who enjoy the confidence of the people. The eldest man acts as the chief Judge. The court usually sits in the evening after all have returned from their work. They decide disputes of all
kinds—land disputes, petty quarrels, divorce cases, suits over division of property, disputes about debts, temple disputes, etc. Anyone who disobeys the Panchayat is excommunicated. When the court is opened the watchman of the village calls out for the parties to appear. The plaintiff is first called, and he advances and prostrates himself before the judges. They hear his complaint and ask for his evidence. They hear the statement of the defendant and his witnesses. They then ask everyone to retire while they talk the matter over for some hours and reach a decision. They then call the parties in and the chief judge delivers the judgment somewhat as follows: "Thou fool, donkey, Pariah, dog, have you no work to do? We charge you to bring ten coconuts in the name of our village to the goddess Kali and contribute three rupees to the village fund." He will prostrate himself saying, "Please forgive me this time." And if one of the judges thinks the fine is too heavy he will whisper to the other judges to reduce the fine. The great numbers of young lawyers are destroying the Panchayat system by encouraging the villagers to go to the regular courts with every imaginable thing in order to exploit them. The panchayat system should be encouraged. There are always some people in every village engaged in lawsuits and this is one of the chief causes of India's poverty. Mr. Pandian, himself a caste Hindu and lover of Indian ways, has perhaps overdrawn the picture in favour of the village Panchayat, though it has many good points and is usually much cheaper and more agreeable to the simple villagers who are forever quarrelling over the least of grievances. He says nothing about the Panchayats who refuse to investigate the case until the parties concerned bring so many pots of liquor and then get so drunk before the night is over.
that the case is dropped until another court is called and more toddy supplied. The great trouble in village government is the same as for the country as a whole, their lack of religious unity; only here it is not so often Muhammadan against Hindu as it is Hindu divided against himself and his Outcaste fellows. "As the unit of Indian life is the village," says Fisher, "So the unit of village life is the caste. Every village is a collection of wards or castes, and each caste has its headman or Mayor, who acts as political, religious and social dictator". We have our classes in the West but they are fluid, and have no religious sanction, whereas in India religion consecrates the arrangement. Religion expressly sanctions and enjoins it in its most sacred scriptures, the laws of Manu and the Bagavat Ghita. Perhaps the most pervasive injury of the system is the hatred it engenders in the human heart. It makes the upper castes hate the lower because of their injustice in taking this gross advantage of the accident of birth. The Sudra hates the Brahman because it is only human to hate those who bully and make unjust advantage of the weak. Its conspicuous result is to cheapen human life and submerge increasing numbers in degradation. Caste has enfeebled India politically by substituting class exclusiveness for solidarity and class vanity for patriotism.

In Southern India, where Brahmanism has its strong hold, an extremely elaborate code of pollution exists. There are castes whose members defile a Brahman at a distance of twenty-four, thirty-six, or even sixty-four feet. They carry an atmosphere of impurity with them. They may not enter a Hindu temple of the humblest sort, or pass by a high caste quarter of the village.
When they see a Brahman they must leave the road or announce their approach by a special cry, like lepers in the middle ages. That it narrows the circle of human sympathy is obvious, and the absence of any sense of nationality is also to be attributed to it in large part. At a meeting in the winter of 1917, two groups of outcastes in Southern India determined to form a procession along certain roads which they had not been allowed to use. Supported by the home rule league of Palghat (a progressive caste organization) and the police, and bearing a portrait of the King Emperor and the Union Jack, they paraded down the forbidden way. They met no active opposition, but non-Brahman residents, inhabiting the bazaar nearby, sent a long memorial to the Governor of Madras protesting against having "suffered the greatest indignity and pain". The memorial admits that the roads are maintained out of public funds, into which these depressed classes must pay their taxes, but they protested against breaking the old precedent of excluding outcastes from this road. The Governor had made no reply some months later." (Quoted from the Commonwealth of Madras by the Indian Social Reformer). No wonder then that men like the Dewan of Travancore himself, a Brahman, has attacked caste aggressively as the chief obstacle to educational, social, economic, and political progress. And to-day the depressed classes of Travancore have their own special representatives in the legislature, and many of the schools have been thrown open to all classes of H. H. and Maharaja's subjects.

All that we have already said regarding the numerous independent kingdoms, physical barriers, language divisions, religious differences and the educational status of the country as a whole has its bearing on the political condition of the country as a whole. Lord Ronaldshay says that the existence of 70,000,000 Moslems in India is the most formidable obstacle in
the way of those whose battle cry is "India a nation". Just as the slaughter of cattle is an abomination to the Hindu, so the images in the temples and the idol processions of the Hindus are an offence against the austere monotheism of the Muhammadan. The Indian police have a task of extraordinary difficulty. They have to deal on the one hand with a highly efficient criminal class of the great cities and on the other with the most superstitious types, as, for instance, the devotee of the black art who in 1922 murdered two women in Lucknow to propitiate his pet owl, and men who beat a woman to death in the thought that she is casting spells over their children. On the one hand they have to deal with common theft while on the other with human sacrifice. Worst of all is the acute differences of custom and creed, especially between Hindu and Muhammadan, which often requires much attention of the most delicate kind. One soon observes that there is little sense of civic responsibility and not much in the way of public opinion, so that authorities have often to play a lone hand, hindered rather than helped by the community. In short, as Professor Rushbrook Williams says, "The main difficulty seems to be that the people of India have been accustomed throughout the centuries to a rule imposed, as it were, from without, which is independent of their volition and has no roots in their consciousness." The usual attitude of a municipal body toward the Government sanitary authorities, declared an eminent medical officer, in evidence before the Public Services Commission, is one of patient toleration. They look upon the department as one of the inflictions of a beneficent Government. In one Ward of a municipality in Bengal, when twelve candidates ran for two offices, there were thirty-seven voters enthusiastically rushing the polls to vote. The Municipal Committee at Bassin (in Burma) took a referendum on the question of undertaking a water supply
scheme, and the verdict was against the enterprise; but the committee, undismayed, decided that the people did not understand the proposal put before them and so proceeded with the undertaking. In a ward election in a certain town, seven out of eight candidates withdrew at the polling booth because the other was a low caste man with whom they declined to compete. In another case the nominated members of a Board objected to sitting with the elected members, on the ground that the latter might be persons who, according to the social customs of the country, should stand in their presence. An Indian-owned paper complained on the eve of an election, in one of the largest and most important towns in Bengal, that a first offer of Rs 1200 had been made for the seventy-nine votes in a certain locality and that the votes had actually been secured by a cash payment of Rs 1300. In another area an offer of Rs 10 a vote was being made. This habit of bribery is found in its most vigorous form in India. It works everywhere—the gods are bribed, the priests are bribed, the officials are bribed, in fact very little can be accomplished in any field unless backshes is freely indulged in. The village is no exception. Great changes were made in the system of Government in British India by the Government of India Act 1919 which came into general operation in January 1921. The primary object of the framers of the Act was to devise a plan which would render possible the introduction by successive stages of a system of responsible Government in British India in modification of the previous system under which the Governments in India, both central and provincial, received their mandates from the British Parliament acting through the Secretary of State for India.

No field of the administration of India is likely to be more profoundly affected by the reforms of 1919 than local Government. This is one
of the subjects transferred to Indian Ministers. But, on the whole, the progress of local government in India for the past quarter of a century has been very slow and disappointing especially in rural areas. There are, however, some signs, as we shall see in the concluding chapter, that some dry bones are beginning to stir.
Chapter VIII

REFORM

In considering the tremendous power of the religious forces in maintaining a static condition in the village life of India, one is liable to become pessimistic in his outlook for tomorrow. As it was in the beginning so it is now and ever shall be, seems to be, to some people, the past, present and future of India's national history. What is being done that can justify any hope for a new chapter in India's social history? At present the hopes of most Indian reformers rest chiefly on National Congresses and Political Changes. By their means a supposed golden age is to be brought back. But it is an old delusion to believe that man's happiness and well-being can be secured by means of institutions rather than their own conduct. We need only compare the United States with South American republics to see that the real value of representative government depends upon the character of the people. Anyone who knows India will have a great deal of sympathy with the statement of Sir Nadavah Raw that "The longer one lives, observes, and thinks, the more deeply does he feel that there is no community on the face of the earth which suffers less from political evils and more from self-inflicted, or self-accepted, or self-created and therefore avoidable evils than the Hindu community". Yet no one would want to eliminate the national political movement as one of the strong forces attacking the very heart of Hinduism as embodied in the caste system. One of the planks of the new National Swaraj party has to do with the outcastes of India. Every effort is being made to reunite the various religious groups of Muhammedans, Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis, Jews, Christians and even Animists in the great drive for political freedom and an independent national existence.
Organizations of a national character have sprung into existence almost over night, advocating the abolition of caste, the doing away with the custom of infant marriage, widow remarriage, and the universal education of women. The world war sent thousands of the young men of India, in spite of caste restrictions, to the far flung battle lines of France and Mesopotamia. They have returned with a cosmopolitan sense of values and standards. They have a new sense of the place of women in society, since being nursed in the Red Cross Hospitals of France. They began to contrast European villages with their own. One boy declared that the greatest thing he saw in Europe was a cow that filled a bucket with milk. It was necessary to write letters home and he tried hard to learn to write, his people at home had to try to answer it, and both have become more strongly impressed with the need and value of an education. He was also impressed with modern machinery, and Professor Mann in his studies of two villages near Poona discovered that American ploughs had been rented for the village land and one after the other of the farmers were using them in turn. They discovered that their bulls could plough more land with the iron plough and plough it deeper than with the old wooden plough, even though the priest might tell them that bad luck would come in departing from their own established custom. There was no caste in the trenches, and the Indian who was used to the oppression and lordship of Brahmanism was impressed with the sportsmanship of the outside world. The English and German soldiers playing football between battles presented a new idea of war. He also discovered some of his first lessons in hygiene in the army camps as well as some ideas of sanitation. When he came home he was so enthusiastically welcomed and the returning soldiers were so many that it was impossible for the priests to insist that each soldier submit to the usual humiliating propitiatory rite to be readmitted to caste, nor was he in the frame of mind to submit when singled out from the crowd.
Another effect of the European war was the building of large factories in India for war supplies. Before that, India imported most of her manufactured goods. Raw material was shipped to England from India, manufactured in England and shipped back to India. The war made this no longer possible, for the time being. Whereas sixty years ago the wheat and cotton of the village was entirely consumed locally, today thousands of tons of Indian products are actually sold in London before it has been harvested. And owing to the impetus of the war, large modern industries have grown up indigenously, and the germ of manufacture on modern lines already been planted, and has shown a wonderful capacity to thrive in an Indian environment. Many have gone from the village to these centers of industry and never before was the old self-sufficiency and independence of the village community in so precarious a condition. The pressure of ideas from the outside creating new desires and necessities must eventually produce fruit. In spite of the doctrine of Ahimsa, India sold in one year nearly $55,000,000 worth of hides and skins. She has at present 67,000 miles of canals irrigating 28,000,000 acres of land with an estimated crop production to the value of $780,000,000. And when the present scheme is completed there will be over 40,000,000 acres under irrigation. Her export coal increased from 12,000,000 tons in 1910 to 22,500,000 in 1919 while in the same year 300,000,000 gallons of petrol was produced mainly in Burma. It has been estimated that in the Hills of Orissa there are 2,800,000,000 tons of iron ore yet unworked. In 1872 the railroad mileage was 5,389, in 1922 it was 37,266. The road mileage is now 216,000 miles. The railroads carry 503,
000,000 third class passengers annually, and in this number the Indian villager is well represented. The Postoffice handled in 1919 1,186,000 articles and sent 19,000,000 telegrams over 438,000 miles of wire. Increasingly the machinery for fighting famine has been improved until now a repetition of the high mortality of past famines is most unlikely. Cooperative credit societies make borrowing possible at from 9 to 18% whereas under the old system rates as high as 75% were not unusual. This is saving Indian agriculturists some two and one half millions of dollars yearly in unnecessary interest. In 1922 there were 52,182 societies with two million members and a working capital of over 100,000,000 dollars. Even the joint family system, so long central in Hindu society, is showing signs of disappearing. Recent figures seem to show that it is not as common as it was thought to be. For instance, there is only about one woman over fifteen to each house. A Brahman Munshi who worked in one of the modern business houses, when asked what he did about his ceremonial bath before eating his dinner at noon, replied that in these days of modern business they had to put off taking their bath until the evening. The modern train with sixty people in a carriage constructed for thirty is a poor place for the observance of caste distances. Thus the economic forces have already begun to play havoc with India's pet religious notion.

Of all the administrative problems in India, the improvement and diffusion of education is probably the one that at the present moment weighs most heavily with the Government. Most of the difficulties which confront modern India have their roots in the ignorance or defective education of the people. It cannot, said Lord Curzon, in addressing the educational conference convened by him in Simla in 1901, "be a right thing that three out of every four villages should still be without a school and that not much more than
three million boys or less than one fifth of the boys of school age should be in receipt of primary education." And he stressed the urgency of the problem in the following words: "What is the greatest danger in India? What is the source of superstition, suspicion, outbreaks, crime, agrarian discontent and suffering among the masses? It is ignorance. And what is the only antidote to ignorance? Knowledge." There has been considerable advance made along educational lines since this Simla conference. In a letter dated August 3, 1920, to the Director of Public Instruction of Bengal, the Honourable Mr. L. S. S. O'malley, Secretary to the Government of Bengal, conveyed the orders of the Government at Mr. Evan E. Bliss should be placed on special duty for six months to draw up a program for the expansion and improvement of primary education in Bengal. In his report Mr. Bliss writes: "The broad result of all this investigation is to bring out the fact that the question of the expansion and improvement of primary education is only one phase of a general social problem of an immense extent among the people who are for the most part at a very rudimentary stage of development. It is a problem of bodies to be filled and fattened, of minds to be enlightened, and of lives to be set free. The people are poor and unfortunately believe themselves to be poorer for purposes of taxation than they really are". A recent investigation into the question of primary education in Indian villages stated the most common cause of poverty to be debt with high interest, laziness, exploitation, ignorance and lack of skill, drink, extravagance, and conditions resulting from famine, epidemics and sickness. Amongst these indebtedness is placed first while climatic conditions and increase of population are also mentioned. The whole investigation lays elaborate plans for a free and ultimately a compulsory system of primary education in all Bengal.
Other localities have already inaugurated compulsory education as the State of Travancore already referred to. This general diffusion of knowledge is already beginning to make itself manifest in an enlarged reading public. There are now three thousand seven hundred and ninety five presses which issued 1,017 papers, 2,297 periodicals, 1,690 books in English and 10,105 in the vernaculars during the year 1920. All this has an important influence on the religious beliefs and practices of the people. The Hindu reverences every object good and bad in the Hindu Pantheon, and is influenced by traditions from inspired sages, but when confronted with western education and a science and philosophy which question everything in Heaven and earth, he begins to apply the new teachings to old conditions and traditions and soon finds the two irreconcilable.

In spite of the doctrine of Ahimsa, transmigration and Karma, modern science is making headway and playing havoc with the rats and garmas of India. Even leprosy, the curse of the Gods, is yielding to the heroic efforts of a band of modern scientists. Sir Leonard Rogers recently said in a lecture before the Royal Society of arts: "I now come to the work of the last few years in improving the treatment of leprosy. This advance has been attained through the efforts of several research workers, among whom I am fortunate enough to have a place, and its history is briefly as follows. As early as 1854 the attention of English physicians was drawn to an old Indian remedy for leprosy, Chalmogra oil, but owing to the difficulty most patients have in taking effective doses for long periods on account of its nauseating properties, it failed to do more than retard the advance of typically advanced cases. Attention was next directed to bacterial injections as the result of the establishment of vaccine immunology by Sir Almroth Wright, and some striking
improvements were obtained, which, unfortunately, did not prove to be very lasting in nature. Research once more became directed to the old Indian remedy and efforts were made to find a suitable method of administering it by injection to overcome the limitations of the oral method....

With the help of Dr. Chuni Lal Bose, of Calcutta Medical College chemical laboratory, sodium gynocardate was made and I found it to be of value in leprosy subcutaneously, although painful, which limited its practical value. I next ascertained its suitability for intravenous injection and found this method of administration to be almost painless and much more efficient, and I very soon obtained local inflammatory reactions in the leprous tissues, with rapid destruction of the causative organism, such as I had not seen previously, and at once realized that an important advance had been made, which I followed up during my last four years in India. As a result of my four and one half year's work in Calcutta, of fifty-one cases treated for from three to eighteen months, 40% cleared up completely, becoming bacteriologically negative, and a further 40% had so greatly improved that they were likely to clear up in time." Since Sir Leonard made this report a year ago even greater results have been obtained by Dr. Kerr at Ditchpalli and other places.

This last great victory of medical science is awakening the people to the vast possibilities which lie ahead for India in the field of medical science and thousands are beginning to see that the vast bulk of the suffering of India is indeed unnecessary. Dispensaries for the treatment of leprosy have been opened all over the country and a vast fund known as the Viceroy's Leprosy Fund has been raised for the fight on this scourge. Dispensaries are being opened not only for lepers but in other fields as well. Campaigns have been conducted for the inoculation of districts threatened with plague, smallpox vaccination is becoming more common, and even baby health demon-

1. Oldrieve "India's Lepers" P.77
strations conducted under the leadership of Lady Reading have created more interest than was generally thought possible. A general battle has opened between the gods and the bacteriologists, which seems day by day to be growing less encouraging for the gods.

Even the world movement for the emancipation of women has had its influence on India. Mrs. Naidu and Pandita Ramabi have found a place among the noble band of modern women. Indian women are devoted and faithful mothers and their sons are beginning to appreciate it. Much as they may have been despised as a sex, the Indian man always speaks of his mother with extravagant devotion. He is even beginning to realize the disadvantages to himself of debarring women from all education and culture. It is now dawning on him that illiterate and superstitious women are incapable of creating the home atmosphere of a woman who is educated and intelligent. Taking the country as a whole the ratio of females to males is steadily rising, now reaching the highest point since censuses were scientifically taken (1881). Formerly infanticide was very prevalent. In one village only one daughter had been married in two hundred years. Many a village had not a girl, and in one class of Rajputs there were only 702 women to 6,203 men. But this situation is improving under stringent laws, though even the last census report expresses the belief that female infanticide is still practiced in some localities. Though there are actually eleven times as many men as women who can read and write, yet even in this field the signs are significant. During the last decade, while male literacy increased 15%, female literacy increased 61%, a process which has been going on more or less for the past thirty years. It should also be added that literacy for Indian Christian women is ten times as high as the figure for the entire country.

1. King "Other Indias" P.11
All these advances in the field of economics, science, health, education and women's rights have naturally caused thinking men to reflect and examine the content of Hinduism itself. In fact we find Sir Madhava Rao advocating several years ago a "judicious revival or repair of Hinduism to suit the present time." The "Hindu", the leading native paper of South India, makes the following remarks in an article on "social and religious reform": "As in Christian countries, so in our country also our moral and religious ideas are derived from our theology. But this theology as well as these ideas must be explained away, modified and reformed in certain aspects at least, to suit the changes that in course of time take place in the intelligence of the people. It is no longer possible to justify to the young educated Hindu apparently immoral and crude practices because they are sanctioned in certain Puranas. The Hindu mythology has to be purged of the absurdities that have overgrown it during the centuries of ignorance and of superstitious and timid isolation. In the same way, the moral ideas of our common people have to be improved. An orthodox Hindu would tolerate falsehood, cowardice and self-abasement, but would damn to perdition his neighbour who swerves the least from accepted conventions even in the details of personal habits. Such moral perversity does not indicate a healthy social condition. Similarly our ideas of charity, of social distinction, education, and social wellbeing in general have to be drawn out of the influence of an obsolete and backward civilization, and brought in harmony with the fresh spirit of the time". Until lately the stories told by Krishna in the Mahabharata were generally held to be literally true, and the Bhagvata Purana only cautioned its readers against imitating them, but now the conduct

1. Murdoch "Hinduism" P3
of Krishna as formerly understood is beginning to be felt unbecoming in a god, and so attempts are now being made to give these stories a spiritual meaning. There is a growing feeling against such abominations are are represented by the holy festival. The Hindu Prakash, referring to the Holi Festival, says: "We think that committees ought to be formed in every place for the purpose of putting down the evil by prosecuting those who use obscene language in public. Our Municipal Boards and Commissioners could do much in the matter." A harmless festival called the Pavitra Holi has been substituted in the Punjab, as an attempt to stamp out some of the unholy practices of the Holi Festival. The custom of dedicating young girls to the temples in infancy, where they are brought up nominally as dancing girls but really as prostitutes, is being attacked not only by religious reformers but even by native governments. A recent resolution by the Nizam of Hyderabad states that while the Nizam has no intention of interfering with the religious practices of his people he will not tolerate any persons employing young girls for immoral purposes under the guise of religion.

But caste has become the target of attack upon which all reform agencies concentrate. The influences working against it are numerous. The common sense of the Indian people, inconvenienced by the demands of these old customs battling against the necessities of modern civilized life, is the most powerful antagonist of the caste system. Third class carriages of Indian trains help to undermine it. Modern bottled soda water or tinned biscuits don't carry ritualistic infection. Politics too are working against it. Outcaste educated men are elected to provincial councils where they sit next to caste men and they pass papers and do business together. At a conference in Bombay of Hindus one of the speakers summarized the evils of

1. Fisher "India's Silent Revolution"
2. Murdock "Festivals" P.43
caste as follows: "Caste has produced disunion and discord. It has made honest manual labour contemptible and retarded progress. It has brought on physical degeneracy by confining marriage within narrow limits. It has suppressed individuality and the independence of character and, while affording the opportunity of culture to the few, it has caused the degredation of of the masses. The social system and the whole tone of religious thought with its philosophy of fatalism is against the individualistic self-assertion necessary to success in the struggle for existence. It is opposed to co-operation for civic ideals and promotes indifference to life". The same views have been expressed by Babu Keshab, Chandra Sen and many other modern leaders of Young India.

Last but not least, the force underlying all these efforts, and of which these are but manifestations, stands Christianity as represented by its schools, colleges, hospitals, agricultural experts and ethical ideals. Christianity, directly or indirectly, says King, "is responsible for the abolition of Sati, the practical elimination of infanticide, the present system of education, the education of women, the establishment of hospitals, much of the antagonism to caste, the beginnings of the elevation of the depressed classes, the temperance movement, social service, raising the marriage age and many like movements". Lord Reading, the Viceroy, sent the following message to the Bishops of the Methodist Church at their executive meeting in Bangalore in 1922: "Every administrator in India must acknowledge that the educational system of India was created and developed by missionaries; that many of the reform movements in society and Government have been brought to pass by missionaries, that the human contacts of one colour and race with another colour and race which are creating a new India are the direct results

1. Fisher "India's Silent Revolution".

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of teaching and practice of the brotherhood of man by the missionaries."

The success attending the movement toward Christianity is indicated by the statistical returns which show an inflow into the Christian Church during the past decade of something between three and four hundred every day. And how deeply it has registered itself in Indian thought and life may be gauged to some extent by the fact that the students of the National school under the leadership of Mr. Ghandi himself have this year voted to study the New Testament for their moral guidance. A little over one hundred years ago the Duke of Wellington wrote concerning the Deccan that the "Country is in complete chaos from the Godavery to Hyderabad, the situation shocking, the people starving in hundreds and no Government to afford the slightest relief". But today we find one enthusiast writing that Hyderabad State has improved as much in the last forty years as England has improved since the days of the Stuarts.
Glossary

Ananta - form of Vishnu
Appa - cry of surprise
Ayenar - local god
Acharya - a religious teacher
Ammas - village goddesses
Anna - two cents

Bagavat Gita - sacred poem
Brahma - the god of creation
Bharata - India
Buffaloes - milk animals
Bachshis - presents
Benares - place of pilgrimage
Betelnut - the common chewing nut of India

Chapati - a small cake
Chandala - outcaste
Coriander - seed used in cooking
Chattarams - rest houses
Charpai - a bedstead

Devadasi - temple girls
Dravidian - South India stock
Dhobi - washerman
Dhruva - the pole star
Dacca - south India country
Guru - a teacher
Gayan Kup - name of sacred well
Ganga - sacred river Ganges or name of god
Gangaputras - priests
Gayawalas - priests of Gaya
Ganesha - elephant-headed god
Gautama Dharmasutra - collection of laws

Hindustan - India
Himalaya - mountain ranges

Jaggery - kind of sugar
Jains - religious sect
Jatra - religious festival

Karachi - name of town
Kali - goddess
Karma - Hindu doctrine
Kshatriya - soldier caste
Kashi Kanda - religious book
Katha - name of sacred tree

Lanka - an island - Ceylon

Mariamma - goddess of smallpox
Madiga - a leather worker
Manu - the Hindu lawgiver
Monsoon - the rainy season
Munsif - headman of the village
Maharaja - king
Mahadeva - Vishnu
Manikarnaka - golden earring
Mahaprasad - sacred food
Mahavira - founder of Jainism
Mahabharata - a poem
Holas - festivals
Hela - a small creek
Nanak - name
Parsis - religious group
Parchita - family priest
Panchayat - village tribunal
Pandit - a teacher
Palamquin - a vehicle for carrying people
Pandas - pilgrim hunters
Pongal - rice festival
Preta - ghost
Pitri - an ancestor
Pinda - a ball of rice flour
Patna - a town
Putra - a son
Put - Hindu hell
Parvati - wife of Siva
Puranas - religious books
Pachamana - low castes
Plantain - banana
Puja - worship
Purdah system - custom of keeping women secluded

Raja - king
Ryot - a farmer
Ramayana - a poem
Rupee - about thirty cents

Saffron - powder used in cooking
Sudra - the farmer caste
Sukra - venus
Sastras - sacred writings
Saktas - female worshippers
Sanskrit - language
Shiva - the god of destruction
Salagramas - representations of Vishnu

Shraddha - funeral ceremony
Sirdars - men who import beggars to make money
Sanyasas - ascetics
Shesha - an ascetic
Shivites - followers of Siva

Sikh - religious sect

Tantara - corrupt sacred books
Talakdar - government official
Tahsildar - government official
Tulasi - sacred plant
Tamarind - seed of a tamarind tree
Transmigration - rebirth

Tamil - language used near Madras

Toddy - country liquor
Vaishayyas - merchant class
Varna - colour
Vaikuntha - Vishnu's Heaven
Vedas - ancient scriptures
Yamacharis - religious devotees
Yogana - length measure
Zamindars - landlords