then poured over him in succession. A piece of new cloth is laid on his head, and afterwards placed seven times in contact with the earth. During this ritual the boy keeps his eyes shut, and it is believed that if he should open them before its completion, his children would be born blind. When the bride leaves her father's house she and all her relatives mourn and weep noisily, and the bride continues doing so until she is well over a mile from her own village. Similarly on the first three or four visits which she pays to her parents after her wedding, she begins crying loudly a mile away from their house, and continues until she reaches it. It is the etiquette also that women should cry whenever they meet relatives from a distance. In such cases when two women see each other they cry together, each placing her head on the other's shoulder and her hands at her sides. While they cry they change the position of their heads two or three times, and each addresses the other according to their relationship, as mother, sister, and so on. Or if any member of the family has recently died, they call upon him or her, exclaiming 'O my mother! O my sister! O my father! Why did not I, unfortunate one, die instead of thee?' A woman when weeping with a man holds to his sides and rests her head against his breast. The man exclaims at intervals, 'Stop crying, do not cry.' When two women are weeping together it is a point of etiquette that the elder should stop first and then beg her companion to do so, but if it is doubtful which is the elder, they sometimes go on crying for an hour at a time, exciting the younger spectators to mirth, until at length some elder steps forward and tells one of them to stop. The Chauhāns permit the remarriage of widows, and a woman is bound by no restrictions as to her choice of a second husband.

The goddess Dūrga or Devi is chiefly revered by the caste, who observe fasts in her honour in the months of Kunwār (September) and Chait (March). When they make a *badna* or vow, they usually offer goats to the goddess, and sow the *Jawaras* or Gardens of Adonis in her name, but except on such occasions they present less costly articles, as cocoanuts, betel-leaves, areca-nuts and flowers. On the Dasahra festival they worship the *lāthi* or stick which is the

badge of office of the village watchman. They were formerly addicted to petty theft, and it is said that they worshipped the *khunta* or pointed rod for digging through the wall of a house. The caste usually burn the dead, but children whose ears or noses have not been pierced are buried. Children who die before they have begun to eat grain are not mourned at all, while for older children the period of mourning is three to seven days, and for adults ten days. On the tenth day they clean their houses, shave themselves and offer balls of rice to the dead under the direction of a Brāhman, to whom they present eating and drinking vessels, clothes, shoes and cattle with the belief that the articles will thus become available for the use of the dead man in the other world. The Chauhāns will not eat fowls, pork or beef, and in some places they abstain from drinking liquor.

Chhīpa, Rangāri, Bhaosar, Nirāli, Nilgar.—The Hindu caste of cotton printers and dyers. They are commonly known as Chhīpa in the northern Districts and Rangāri or Bhaosar in the Marātha country. The Chhīpas and Rangāris together number about 23,000 persons. In the south of the Central Provinces and Berār cotton is a staple crop, and the cotton-weaving industry is much stronger than in the north, and as a necessary consequence the dyers also would be more numerous. Though the Chhīpas and Rangāris do not intermarry or dine together, no essential distinction exists between them. They are both of functional origin, pursue exactly the same occupation, and relate the same story about themselves, and no good reason therefore exists for considering them as separate castes. Nīlgar or Nirāli is a purely occupational term applied to Chhīpas or Rangāris who work in indigo (*nīl*); while Bhaosar is another name for the Rangāris in the northern Districts. 1. Constitution of the caste.

The Rangāris say that when Parasurāma, the Brāhman, was slaying the Kshatriyas, two brothers of the warrior caste took refuge in a temple of Devi. One of them, called Bhaosar, threw himself upon the image, while the other hid behind it. The goddess saved them both and told them to adopt the vocation of dyers. The Rangāris are descended 2. Its origin and position.

from the brother who was called Bhaosar and the Chhīpas from the other brother, because he hid behind the image (*chhipna*, to hide). The word is really derived from *chhāpna*, to print, because the Chhīpas print coloured patterns on cotton cloths with wooden stamps. Rangāri comes from the common word *rang* or colour. The Chhīpas have a slightly different version of the same story, according to which the goddess gave one brother a needle and a piece of thread, and the other some red betel-leaf which she spat at him out of her mouth; and told one to follow the vocation of a tailor, and the other that of a dyer. Hence the first was called Chhīpi or Shimpi and the second Chhīpa. This story indicates a connection between the dyeing and tailoring castes in the Marātha Districts, which no doubt exists, as one subcaste of the Rangāris is named after Nāmdeo, the patron saint of the Shimpis or tailors. Both the dyeing and tailoring industries are probably of considerably later origin than that of cotton-weaving, and both are urban rather than village industries. And this consideration perhaps accounts for the fact that the Chhīpas and Rangāris rank higher than most of the weaving castes, and no stigma or impurity attaches to them.

3. Caste sub-divisions.

The caste have a number of subdivisions, such as the Malaiyas or immigrants from Mālwa, the Gujrāti who come from Gujarāt, the Golias or those who dye cloth with *goli ka rang*, the fugitive aniline dyes, the Nāmdeos who belong to the sect founded by the Darzi or tailor of that name, and the Khatris, these last being members of the Khatri caste who have adopted the profession.

4. Marriage and other customs.

Marriage is forbidden between persons so closely connected as to have a common ancestor in the third generation. In Bhandāra it is obligatory on all members of the caste, who know the bride or bridegroom, to ask him or her to dine. The marriage rite is that prevalent among the Hindustāni castes, of walking round the sacred post. Divorce and the marriage of widows are permitted. In Narsinghpur, when a bachelor marries a widow, he first goes through a mock ceremony by walking seven times round an earthen vessel filled with cakes; this rite being known as Langra Biyāh or the lame marriage. The caste burn their dead, placing the head to the north. On the day of Dasahra the

Bemrose, Collo., Derby.

CHHĪPA OR CALICO-PRINTER AT WORK.

Chhīpas worship their wooden stamps, first washing them and then making an offering to them of a cocoanut, flowers and an image consisting of a bottle-gourd standing on four sticks, which is considered to represent a goat. The Chhīpas rank with the lower artisan castes, from whose hands Brāhmans will not take water. Nevertheless some of them wear the sacred thread and place sect-marks on their foreheads.

5. Occupation.

The bulk of the Chhīpas dye cloths in red, blue or black, with ornamental patterns picked out on them in black and white. Formerly their principal agent was the *al* or Indian mulberry (*Morinda citrifolia*), from which a rich red dye is obtained. But this indigenous product has been ousted by alizarin, a colouring agent made from coal-tar, which is imported from Germany, and is about thirty per cent cheaper than the native dye. Chhīpas prepare *sāris* or women's wearing-cloths, and floor and bed cloths. The dye stamps are made of teakwood by an ordinary carpenter, the flat surface of the wood being hollowed out so as to leave ridges which form either a design in curved lines or the outlines of the figures of men, elephants and tigers. There is a great variety of patterns, as many as three hundred stamps having been found in one Chhīpa's shop. The stamps are usually covered with a black ink made of sulphate of iron, and this is fixed by myrobalans; the Nīlgars usually dye a plain blue with indigotin. No great variety or brilliancy of colours is obtained by the Hindu dyers, who are much excelled in this branch of the art by the Muhammadan Rangrez. In Gujarāt dyeing is strictly forbidden by the caste rules of the Chhīpas or Bhaosars during the four rainy months, because the slaughter of insects in the dyeing vat adds to the evil and ill-luck of that sunless time.[1]

[1] *Bombay Gazetteer, Hindus of Gujarāt*, p. 178.

CHITĀRI

LIST OF PARAGRAPHS

1. Origin and traditions.

Chitāri, Chiter, Chitrakār, Mahārana. — A caste of painters on wood and plaster. Chiter is the Hindustāni, and Chitāri the Marāthi name, both being corruptions of the Sanskrit Chitrakār. Mahārana is the term used in the Uriya country, where the caste are also known as Phāl-Barhai, or a carpenter who only works on one side of the wood. Chitāri is further an occupational term applied to Mochis and Jīngars, or leather-workers, who have adopted the occupation of wall-painting, and there is no reason to doubt that the Chitāris were originally derived from the Mochis, though they have now a somewhat higher position. In Mandla the Chitrakārs and Jīngars are separate castes, and do not eat or intermarry with one another. Neither branch will take water from the Mochis, who make shoes, and some Chitrakārs even refuse to touch them. They say that the founder of their caste was Biskarma,[1] the first painter, and that their ancestors were Rājpūts, whose country was taken by Akbar. As they were without occupation Akbar then assigned to them the business of making saddles and bridles for his cavalry and scabbards for their swords. It is not unlikely that the Jīngar caste did really originate or first become differentiated from the Mochis and Chamārs in Rājputāna owing to the demand for such articles, and this would account for the Mochis and Jīngars having adopted Rājpūt names for their sections, and making a claim to Rājpūt

[1] A corruption for Viswakarma, the divine artificer and architect.

descent. The Chitrakārs of Mandla say that their ancestors belonged to Garha, near Jubbulpore, where the tomb of a woman of their family who became *sati* is still to be seen. Garha, which was once the seat of an important Gond dynasty with a garrison, would also naturally have been a centre for their craft.

Another legend traces their origin from Chitrarekha, a nymph who was skilled in painting and magic. She was the friend of a princess Usha, whose father was king of Sohāgpur in Hoshangābād. Usha fell in love with a beautiful young prince whom she saw in a dream, and Chitrarekha drew the portraits of many gods and men for her, until finally Usha recognised the youth of her dream in the portrait of Aniruddha, the grandson of Krishna. Chitrarekha then by her magic power brought Aniruddha to Usha, but when her father found him in the palace he bound him and kept him in prison. On this Krishna appeared and rescued his grandson, and taking Usha from her father married them to each other. The Chitāris say that as a reward to Chitrarekha, Krishna promised her that her descendants should never be in want, and hence members of their caste do not lack for food even in famine time.[1] The Chitāris are declining in numbers, as their paintings are no longer in demand, the people preferring the cheap coloured prints imported from Germany and England.

2. Social customs.

The caste is a mixed occupational group, and those of Marātha, Telugu and Hindustāni extraction marry among themselves. A few wear the sacred thread, and abstain from eating flesh or drinking liquor, while the bulk of them do not observe these restrictions.

Among the Jīngars women accompany the marriage procession, but not with the Chitāris.

Widow-marriage is allowed, but among the Mahārānas a wife who has lived with her husband may not marry any one except his younger brother, and if there are none she must remain a widow. In Mandla, if a widow marries her younger brother-in-law, half her first husband's property goes to him finally, and half to the first husband's children.

[1] The story, however, really belongs to northern India. Usha is the goddess of dawn.

If she marries an outsider she takes her first husband's property and children with her. Formerly if a wife misbehaved the Chitāri sometimes sold her to the highest bidder, but this custom has fallen into abeyance, and now if a man divorces his wife her father usually repays to him the expenses of his marriage. These he realises in turn from any man who takes his daughter. A second wife worships the spirit of the dead first wife on the day of Akhātīj, offering some food and a breast-cloth, so that the spirit may not trouble her.

3. Birth and childhood.

A pregnant woman must stay indoors during an eclipse; if she goes out and sees it they believe that her child will be born deformed. They think that a woman in this condition must be given any food which she takes a fancy for, so far as may be practicable, as to thwart her desires would affect the health of the child. Women in this condition sometimes have a craving for eating earth; then they will eat either the scrapings or whitewash from the walls, or black clay soil, or the ashes of cowdung cakes to the extent of a small handful a day. A woman's first child should be born in her father-in-law's or husband's house if possible, but at any rate not in her father's house. And if she should be taken with the pangs of travail while on a visit to her own family, they will send her to some other house for her child to be born. The ears of boys and the ears and nostrils of girls are pierced, and until this is done they are not considered to be proper members of the caste and can take food from any one's hand. The Chitāris of Mandla permit a boy to do this until he is married. A child's hair is not shaved when it is born, but this should be done once before it is three years old, whether it be a boy or girl. After this the hair may be allowed to grow, and shaved off or simply cut as they prefer. Except in the case of illness a girl's hair is only shaved once, and that of an adult woman is never cut, unless she becomes a widow and makes a pilgrimage to a sacred place, when it is shaved off as an offering.

4. The evil eye.

In order to avert the evil eye they hang round a child's neck a nut called *bajar-battu*, the shell of which they say will crack and open if any one casts the evil eye on the child. If it is placed in milk the two parts will come together again.

They also think that the nut attracts the evil eye and absorbs its effect, and the child is therefore not injured. If they think that some one has cast the evil eye on a child, they say a charm, '*Ishwar, Gauri, Pārvati ke ān nazar dur ho jao,*' or 'Depart, Evil Eye, in the name of Mahādeo and Pārvati,' and as they say this they blow on the child three times; or they take some salt, chillies and mustard in their hand and wave it round the child's head and say, '*Telin kī lāgi ho, Tamolin kī lāgi ho, Marārin kī ho, Gorania (Gondin) kī ho, oke, oke, parparāke phut jāwe,*' 'If it be a Telin, Tambolin, Marārin or Gondin who has cast the evil eye, may her eyes crack and fall out.' And at the same time they throw the mustard, chillies and salt on the fire so that the eyes of her who cast the evil eye may crack and fall out as these things crackle in the fire.

If tiger's claws are used for an amulet, the points must be turned outwards. If any one intends to wish luck to a child, he says, '*Tori balayān leun,*' and waves his hands round the child's head several times to signify that he takes upon himself all the misfortunes which are to happen to the child. Then he presses the knuckles of his hands against the sides of his own head till they crack, which is a lucky omen, averting calamity. If the knuckles do not crack at the first attempt, it is repeated two or three times. When a man sneezes he will say 'Chatrapati,' which is considered to be a name of Devi, but is only used on this occasion. But some say nothing. After yawning they snap their fingers, the object of which, they say, is to drive away sleep, as otherwise the desire will become infectious and attack others present. But if a child yawns they sometimes hold one of their hands in front of his mouth, and it is probable that the original meaning of the custom was to prevent evil spirits from entering through the widely opened mouth, or the yawner's own soul or spirit from escaping; and the habit of holding the hand before the mouth from politeness when yawning inadvertently may be a reminiscence of this.

5. Cradle-songs.

The following are some cradle-songs taken down from a Chitrakār, but probably used by most of the lower Hindu castes:

1. Mother, rock the cradle of your pretty child. What is the cradle made of, and what are its tassels made of?
The cradle is made of sandalwood, its tassels are of silk.
Some Gaolin (milkwoman) has overlooked the child, he vomits up his milk.
Dasoda [1] shall wave salt and mustard round his head, and he shall play in my lap.
My baby is making little steps. O Sunār, bring him tinkling anklets!
The Sunār shall bring anklets for him, and my child will go to the garden and there we will eat oranges and lemons.
2. My Krishna's tassel is lost, Tell me, some one, where it is. My child is angry and will not come into my arms.
The tears are falling from his eyes like blossoms from the *bela* [2] flower.
He has bangles on his wrists and anklets on his feet, on his head a golden crown and round his waist a silver chain.

The *jhumri* or tassel referred to above is a tassel adorned with cowries and hung from the top of the cradle so that the child may keep his eyes on it while the cradle is being rocked.

3. Sleep, sleep, my little baby; I will wave my hands round your head [3] on the banks of the Jumna. I have cooked hot cakes for you and put butter in them; all the night you lay awake, now take your fill of sleep.
The little mangoes are hanging on the tree; the rope is in the well; sleep thou till I go and come back with water.
I will hang your cradle on the banyan tree, and its rope to the pīpal tree; I will rock my darling gently so that the rope shall never break.

The last song may be given in the vernacular as a specimen:

4. *Rām kī Chireya, Rām ko khet.*
Khaori Chireya, bhar, bhar pet.
Tan munaiyān khā lao khet,
Agao, labra, gāli det;
Kahe ko, labra, gāli de;
Apni bhuntia gin, gin le.

or—

The field is Rāma's, the little birds are Rāma's; O birds, eat your fill; the little birds have eaten up the corn.

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[1] Krishna's mother.

[2] Little white flowers like jasmine. This simile would be unlikely to occur to the ordinary observer who sees a Hindu child crying.

[3] *Tori balayān leun.* For explanation see above.

The surly farmer has come to the field and scolds them; the little birds say, 'O farmer, why do you scold us? count your ears of maize, they are all there.'

This song commemorates a favourite incident in the life of Tulsi Dās, the author of the Rāmāyana, who when he was a little boy was once sent by his *guru* to watch the crop. But after some time the *guru* came and found the field full of birds eating the corn and Tulsi Dās watching them. When asked why he did not scare them away, he said, 'Are they not as much the creatures of Rāma as I am? how should I deprive them of food?'

6. Occupation.

The Chitāris pursue their old trade, principally in Nāgpur city, where the taste for wall-paintings still survives; and they decorate the walls of houses with their crude red and blue colours. But they have now a number of other avocations. They paint pictures on paper, making their colours from the tins of imported aniline dyeing-powders which are sold in the bazār; but there is little demand for these. They make small pictures of the deities which the people hang on their walls for a day and then throw away. They also paint the bodies of the men who pretend to be tigers at the Muharram festival, for which they charge a rupee. They make the clay paper-covered masks of monkeys and demons worn by actors who play the Rāmlīla or story of Rāma on the Rāmnaomi festival in Chait (March); they also make the *tāzias* or representations of the tomb of Hussain and paper figures of human beings with small clay heads, which are carried in the Muharram procession. They make marriage crowns; the frames of these are of conical shape with a half-moon at the top, made from strips of bamboo; they are covered with red paper picked out with yellow and green and with tinfoil, and are ornamented with borders of date-palm leaves. The crowns cost from four annas to a rupee each. They make the artificial flowers used at weddings; these are stuck on a bamboo stick and at the arrival and departure of the bridegroom are scrambled for by the guests, who take them home as keepsakes or give them to their children for playthings. The flowers copied are the lotus, rose and chrysanthemum, and the imitations are quite good. Sometimes the bridegroom is

surrounded by trays or boxes of flowers, carried in procession and arranged so as to look as if they were planted in beds. Other articles made by the Chitrakār are paper fans, paper globes for hanging to the roofs of houses, Chinese lanterns made either of paper or of mica covered with paper, and small caps of velvet embroidered with gold lace. At the Akti festival[1] they make pairs of little clay dolls, dressing them as male and female, and sell them in red lacquered bamboo baskets, and the girls take them to the jungle and pretend that they are married. Formerly the Chitrakārs made clay idols for temples, but these have been supplanted by marble images imported from Jaipur. The Jīngars make the cloth saddles on which natives ride, and some of them bind books, the leather for which is made from goat-skin, and is not considered so impure as that made from the hides of cattle. But one class of them, who are considered inferior, make leather harness from cow-hide and buffalo-hide.

Chitrakathi, Hardas.[2]—A small caste of religious mendicants and picture showmen in the Marātha Districts. In 1901 they numbered 200 persons in the Central Provinces and 1500 in Berār, being principally found in the Amraoti District. The name, Mr. Enthoven writes,[3] is derived from *chitra*, a picture, and *katha*, a story, and the professional occupation of the caste is to travel about exhibiting pictures of heroes and gods, and telling stories about them. The community is probably of mixed functional origin, for in Bombay they have exogamous section-names taken from those of the Marāthas, as Jādhow, More, Powār and so on, while in the Central Provinces and Berār an entirely different set is found. Here several sections appear to be named after certain offices held or functions performed by their members at the caste feasts. Thus the Atak section are the caste headmen; the Mānkari appear to be a sort of substitute for the Atak or their grand viziers, the word

[1] Commencement of the agricultural year.

[2] This article is partly based on a paper by Mr. Bijai Bahadur, Naib-Tahsīldār, Bālāghāt.

[3] *Bombay Ethnographic Survey*, draft article on Chitrakathi.

Mānkar being primarily a title applied to Marātha noblemen, who held an official position at court; the Bhojni section serve the food at marriage and other ceremonies; the Kākra arrange for the lighting; the Kothārya are store-keepers; and the Ghoderao (from *ghoda*, a horse) have the duty of looking after the horses and bullock-carts of the castemen who assemble. The Chitrakathis are really no doubt the same caste as the Chitāris or Chitrakārs (painters) of the Central Provinces, and, like them, a branch of the Mochis (tanners), and originally derived from the Chamārs. But as the Berār Chitrakathis are migratory instead of settled, and in other respects differ from the Chitāris, they are treated in a separate article. Marriage within the section is forbidden, and, besides this, members of the Atak and Mānkari sections cannot intermarry as they are considered to be related, being divisions of one original section. The social customs of the caste resemble those of the Kunbis, but they bury their dead in a sitting posture, with the face to the east, and on the eighth day erect a platform over the grave. At the festival of Akhatīj (3rd of light Baisākh)[1] they worship a vessel of water in honour of their dead ancestors, and in Kunwār (September) they offer oblations to them. Though not impure, the caste occupy a low social position, and are said to prostitute their married women and tolerate sexual licence on the part of unmarried girls. Mr. Kitts[2] describes them as "Wandering mendicants, sometimes suspected of associating with Kaikāris for purposes of crime; but they seem nevertheless to be a comparatively harmless people. They travel about in little huts like those used by the Waddars; the men occasionally sell buffaloes and milk; the women beg, singing and accompanying themselves on the *thāli*. The old men also beg, carrying a flag in their hand, and shouting the name of their god, Hari Vithal (from which they derive their name of Hardās). They are fond of spirits, and, when drunk, become pot-valiant and troublesome." The *thāli* or plate on which their women play is also known as *sarthāda*, and consists of a small brass dish coated with

[1] May–June. The Akhatīj is the beginning of the agricultural year.

[2] *Berār Census Report* (1881), paragraph 206. The passage is slightly altered and abridged in reproduction.

wax in the centre; this is held on the thigh and a pointed stick is moved in a circle so as to produce a droning sound. The men sometimes paint their own pictures, and in Bombay they have a caste rule that every Chitrakathi must have in his house a complete set of sacred pictures; this usually includes forty representations of Rāma's life, thirty-five of that of the sons of Arjun, forty of the Pāndavas, forty of Sīta and Rāwan, and forty of Harishchandra. The men also have sets of puppets representing the above and other deities, and enact scenes with them like a Punch and Judy show, sometimes aided by ventriloquism.

1. General notice.

Cutchi or **Meman, Kachhi, Muamin.**—A class of Muhammadan merchants who come every year from Gujarāt and Cutch to trade in the towns of the Central Provinces, where they reside for eight months, returning to their houses during the four months of the rainy season. In 1911 they numbered about 2000 persons, of whom five-sixths were men, this fact indicating the temporary nature of their settlements. Nevertheless a large proportion of the trade of the Province is in their hands. The caste is fully and excellently described by Khān Bahādur Fazalullah Lutfullah Farīdi, Assistant Collector of Customs, Bombay, in the *Bombay Gazetteer*.[1] He remarks of them: "As shopkeepers and miscellaneous dealers Cutchis are considered to be the most successful of Muhammadans. They owe their success in commerce to their freedom from display and their close and personal attention to and keen interest in business. The richest Meman merchant does not disdain to do what a Pārsi in his position would leave to his clerks. Their hope and courage are also excellent endowments. They engage without fear in any promising new branch of trade and are daring in their ventures, a trait partly inherited from their Lohāna ancestors, and partly due to their faith in the luck which the favour of their saints secures them." Another great advantage arises from their method of trading in small corporations or companies of a number of persons either relations or friends. Some of these will have shops in the great centres of trade, Bombay and Calcutta, and others in

[1] Vol. ix. part. ii. *Muhammadans of Gujarāt*, p. 57.

different places in the interior. Each member then acts as correspondent and agent for all the others, and puts what business he can in their way. Many are also employed as assistants and servants in the shops; but at the end of the season, when all return to their native Gujarāt, the profits from the different shops are pooled and divided among the members in varying proportion. By this method they obtain all the advantages which are recognised as attaching to co-operative trading.

2. Origin of the caste.

According to Mr. Farīdi, from whose description the remainder of this article is mainly taken, the Memans or more correctly Muamins or 'Believers' are converts from the Hindu caste of Lohānas of Sind. They venerate especially Maulāna Abdul Kādir Gīlāni who died at Baghdād in A.D. 1165. His sixth descendant, Syed Yūsufuddīn Kordiri, was in 1421 instructed in a dream to proceed to Sind and guide its people into the way of Islām. On his arrival he was received with honour by the local king, who was converted, and the ruler's example was followed by one Mānikji, the head of one of the *nukhs* or clans of the Lohāna community. He with his three sons and seven hundred families of the caste embraced Islām, and on their conversion the title of Muamin or 'Believer' was conferred on them by the saint. It may be noted that Colonel Tod derives the Lohānas from the Rājpūts, remarking of them:[1] "This tribe is numerous both in Dhāt and Talpūra; formerly they were Rājpūts, but betaking themselves to commerce have fallen into the third class. They are scribes and shopkeepers, and object to no occupation that will bring a subsistence; and as to food, to use the expressive idiom of this region where hunger spurns at law, 'Excepting their cats and their cows they will eat anything.'" In his account of Sind, Postans says of the Lohānas: "The Hindu merchants and bankers have agents in the most remote parts of Central Asia and could negotiate bills upon Candahār, Khelāt, Cābul, Khiva, Herāt, Bokhāra or any other marts of that country. These agents, in the pursuit of their calling, leave Sind for many years, quitting their families to locate themselves among the most savage and intolerant

[1] *Rājasthān*, ii. p. 292.

tribes." This account could equally apply to the Khatris, who also travel over Central Asia, as shown in the article on that caste ; and if, as seems not improbable, the Lohānas and Khatris are connected, the hypothesis that the former, like the latter, are derived from Rājpūts would receive some support.

The present Pīr or head of the community is Sayyid Jāfir Shāh, who is nineteenth in descent from Yūsufuddīn and lives partly in Bombay and partly in Mundra of South Cutch. "At an uncertain date," Mr. Farīdi continues, "the Lohāna or Cutchi Memans passed from Cutch south through Kāthiāwār to Gujarāt. They are said to have been strong and wealthy in Surat during the period of its prosperity (1580–1680). As Surat sank the Cutchi Memans moved to Bombay. Outside Cutch and Kāthiāwār, which may be considered their homes, the Memans are scattered over the cities of north and south Gujarāt and other Districts of Bombay. Beyond that Presidency they have spread as traders and merchants and formed settlements in Calcutta, Madras, the Malabar Coast, South Burma, Siam, Singapore and Java ; in the ports of the Arabian Peninsula, except Muscat, where they have been ousted by the Khojas ; and in Mozambique, Zanzibar and the East African Coast."[1] They have two divisions in Bombay, known as Cutchi or Kachhi and Halai.

3. Social customs.

Cutchis and Memans retain some non-Muhammadan usages. The principal of these is that they do not allow their daughters and widows to inherit according to the rule of Muhammadan law.[2] They conduct their weddings by the Nikāh form and the *mehar* or dowry is always the same sum of a hundred and twenty-five rupees, whatever may be the position of the parties and in the case of widows also.

[1] *Bombay Gazetteer, l.c.*

[2] In recording this point Mr. Farīdi gives the following note: "In 1847 a case occurred which shows how firmly the Memans cling to their original tribal customs. The widow of Hāji Nūr Muhammad of the Lakariya family demanded a share of her deceased husband's property according to Muhammadan law. The *jamā-at* or community decided that a widow had no claim to share her husband's estates under the Hindu law. Before the High Court, in spite of the ridicule of other Sunnis, the elders of the Cutchi Memans declared that their caste rules denied the widow's claim. The matter caused and is still (1896) causing agitation, as the doctors of the Sunni law at Mecca have decided that as the law of inheritance is laid down by the holy Korān, a wilful departure from it is little short of apostasy. The Memans are contemplating a change, but so far they have not found themselves able to depart from their tribal practices."

They say that either party may be divorced by the other for conjugal infidelity, but the *mehar* or dowry must always be paid to the wife in the case of a divorce. The caste eat flesh and fowls and abstain from liquor. Most of them also decline to eat beef as a consequence of their Hindu ancestry, and they will not take food from Hindus of low caste.

DAHĀIT[1]

LIST OF PARAGRAPHS

1. Origin of the caste.

Dahāit, Dahāyat.—A mixed caste of village watchmen of the Jubbulpore and Mandla Districts, who are derived from the cognate caste of Khangārs and from several of the forest tribes. In 1911 the Dahāits numbered about 15,000 persons in the Central Provinces, of whom the large majority were found in the Jubbulpore District and the remainder in Bilāspur, Damoh and Seoni. Outside the Province they reside only in Bundelkhand. According to one story the Dahāits and Khangārs had a common ancestor, and in Mandla again they say that their ancestors were the door-keepers of the Rājas of Mahoba, and were known as Chhadīdar or Darwān; and they came to Mandla about 200 years ago, during the time of Rāja Nizām Shāh of the Rāj-Gond dynasty of that place. In Mandla the names of their subdivisions are given as Rawatia or Rautia, Kol, Mawāsi, Sonwāni and Rajwāria. Of these Kol and Rajwār are the names of separate tribes; Mawāsi is commonly used as a synonym for Korku, another tribe; Sonwāni is the name of a sept found among several of the primitive tribes; while Rāwat is a title borne by the Saonrs and Gonds. The names Rautia and Rajwāria are found as subdivisions of the Kol tribe in Mīrzāpur,[2] and it is not improbable that the

[1] This article is based on papers by Mr. Vithal Rao, Naib-Tahsildār, Bilāspur, and Messrs. Kanhya Lāl and Pyāre Lāl Misra of the Gazetteer office.

[2] Crooke, *Tribes and Castes*, art. Kol.

Dahāits are principally derived from this tribe. The actual name Dahāit is also given by Mr. Crooke as a subdivision of the Kols, and he states it to have the meaning of 'villager,' from *dehāt*, a village. The Dahāits were a class of personal attendants on the chief or Rāja, as will be seen subsequently. They stood behind the royal cushion and fanned him, ran in front of his chariot or litter to clear the way, and acted as door-keepers and ushers. Service of this kind is of a menial nature and, further, demands a considerable degree of physical robustness; and hence members of the non-Aryan forest tribes would naturally be selected for it. And it would appear that these menial servants gradually formed themselves into a caste in Bundelkhand and became the Dahāits. They obtained a certain rise in status, and now rank in the position of village menials above their parent tribes. In the Central Provinces the Dahāits have commonly been employed as village watchmen, a post analogous to that of door-keeper or porter. The caste are also known as Bhāldār or spearmen, and Kotwār or village watchmen.

2. Internal structure: totemism.

The subcastes returned from the Mandla District have already been mentioned. In Bilāspur they have quite different ones, of which two, Joharia and Pailagia, are derived from methods of greeting. Johār is the salutation which a Rājpūt prince sends to a vassal or chief of inferior rank, and Pailagi or 'I fall at your feet' is that with which a member of a lower caste accosts a Brāhman. How such names came to be adopted as subcastes cannot be explained. The caste have a number of exogamous groups named after plants and animals. Members of the Bel,[1] Rusallo and Chheola[2] septs revere the trees after which these septs are named. They will not cut or injure the tree, and at the time of marriage they go and invite it to be present at the ceremony. They offer to the tree the *maihar* cake, which is given only to the members of the family and the husbands and children of daughters. Those belonging to the Nagotia sept[3] will not kill a snake, and at the time of marriage they deposit the *maihar* cake at a snake-hole. Members of the Singh (lion) and Bāgh (tiger) septs will not

[1] *Aegle Marmelos.* [2] *Butea frondosa.* [3] *Nāg*, a cobra.

kill a tiger, and at their weddings they draw his image on a wall and offer the cake to it, being well aware that if they approached the animal himself, he would probably repudiate the relationship and might not be satisfied with the cake for his meal.

3. Marriage and other customs.

Prior to a marriage a bride-price, known as *sukh* or *chāri*, and consisting of six rupees with some sugar, turmeric and sesamum oil, must be paid by the parents of the bridegroom to those of the bride; and in the absence of this they will decline to perform the ceremony. At the wedding the couple go round the sacred post, and then the bridegroom mingles the flames of two burning lamps and pierces the nose of the image of a bullock made in flour. This rite is performed by several castes, and is said to be in commemoration of Krishna's having done so on different occasions. It is probably meant to excuse or legitimise the real operation, which should properly be considered as sinful in view of the sacred character of the animal. And it may be mentioned here that the people of the Vindhyan or Bundelkhand Districts where the Dahāits live do not perforate the nostrils of bullocks, and drive them simply by a rope tied round the mouth. In consequence they have little control over them and are quite unable to stop a cart going downhill, which simply proceeds at the will of the animals until it reaches the level or bangs up against some obstacle. In Bilāspur a widow is expected to remain single for five years after her husband's death, and if she marries within that time she is put out of caste. Divorce is permitted, but is not of frequent occurrence. The caste will excuse a married woman caught in adultery once, but on a second offence she must be expelled. If a woman leaves her husband and goes to live with another man, the latter must repay to her husband the amount expended on his marriage. But in such a case, if the woman was already a widow or *kari aurat*,[1] no penalty is incurred by a man who takes her from her second husband. A man of any good cultivating caste who has a *liaison* with a Dahāit woman will be admitted into the community. An outsider who desires to become a member of the caste must clean his house, break

[1] Kept woman, a term applied to a widow.

his earthen cooking-pots and buy new ones, and give a meal to the caste-fellows at his house. He sits and takes food with them, and when the meal is over he takes a grain of rice from the leaf-plate of each guest and eats it, and drinks a drop of water from his leaf-cup. This act is equivalent to eating the leavings of food, and after it he cannot re-enter his own caste. On such occasions a rupee and a piece of cloth must be given to the headman of the caste, and a piece of cloth to each member of the *panchāyat* or committee. The headman is known as Mirdhān, and a member of the committee as Diwān, the offices of both being hereditary. The caste worship the Hindu and village gods of the locality. They have a curious belief that the skull of a man of the Kāyasth (writer) caste cannot be burnt in fire, and that if it is placed in a dwelling-house the inmates will quarrel. A child's first teeth, if found, are thrown into a sacred river or on to the roof of a house with a few grains of rice, in order that the second teeth may grow white and pointed like the rice. The Jhālar or first hair of a boy or girl is cut between two and ten years of age and is wrapped in a piece of dough and thrown into a sacred river. Women are tattooed on the back of the hands, and also sometimes on the shoulder and the arms above the elbow, but not on the feet or face.

4. Social position.

The Dahāits are now commonly employed as village watchmen and as guards or porters (*chaukidār*) of houses. In Bilāspur they also carry litters and work as navvies and stonebreakers like the Kols. Here they will eat pork, but in Jubbulpore greater regard is paid to Hindu prejudice, and they have given up pork and fowls and begun to employ Brāhmans for their ceremonies. The men of the caste will accept cooked food from any man of the higher castes or those cultivators from whom a Brāhman will take water, but the women are more strict and will only accept it from a Brāhman, Bania, Lodhi or Kurmi.

5. Former occupations: door-keeper and mace-bearer.

In past times the Dahāits were the personal attendants on the king. They fanned him with the *chaur* or yak-tail whisk when he sat in state on the royal cushion. This implement is held sacred and is also used by Brāhmans to fan the deities. On ordinary occasions the Rāja was fanned by a pankha made of *khāskhas* grass and wetted, but not so that

the water fell on his head. They also acted as gate-keepers of the palace, and had the title of Darwān. The gate-keeper's post was a responsible one, as it lay on him to see that no one with evil intentions or carrying secret arms was admitted to the palace. Whenever a chief or noble came to visit the king he deposited his arms with the porter or door-keeper. The necessity of a faithful door-keeper is shown in the proverb: "With these five you must never quarrel: your Guru, your wife, your gate-keeper, your doctor and your cook." The reasons for the inclusion of the others are fairly clear. On the other hand the gate-porter had usually to be propitiated before access was obtained to his master, like the modern chuprāssie; and the resentment felt at his rapacity is shown in the proverb: "The broker, the octroi moharrir, the door-keeper and the bard: these four will surely go to hell." The Darwān or door-keeper would be given the right to collect dues, equivalent to those of a village watchman, from forty or fifty villages. The Dahāits also carried the *chob* or silver mace before the king. This was about five feet long with a knob at the upper end as thick as a man's wrist. The mace-bearer was known as Chobdār, and it was his duty to carry messages and announce visitors; this latter function he performed with a degree of pomposity truly Asiatic, dwelling with open mouth very audibly on some of the most sounding and emphatic syllables in a way that appeared to strangers almost ludicrous,[1] as shown in the following instance: "On advancing, the Chobdārs or heralds proclaimed the titles of this princely cow-keeper in the usual hyperbolical style. One of the most insignificant-looking men I ever saw then became the destroyer of nations, the leveller of mountains, the exhauster of the ocean. After commanding every inferior mortal to make way for this exalted prince, the heralds called aloud to the animal creation, 'Retire, ye serpents; fly, ye locusts; approach not, iguanas, lizards and reptiles, while your lord and master condescends to set his foot on the earth.'"[2] The Dahāits ran before the Rāja's chariot or litter to clear the way for him and announce his coming; and it

[1] Moor's *Hindu Infanticide*, p. 133.
[2] James Forbes, *Oriental Memoirs*, i. p. 313.

was also a principal business of the caste to carry the royal umbrella above the head of the king.

6. The umbrella.

The umbrella was the essential symbol of sovereignty in Asia like the crown in Europe. "Among the ancient Egyptians the umbrella carried with it a mark of distinction, and persons of quality alone could use it. The Assyrians reserved it for royal personages only. The umbrella or parasol, says Layard, that emblem of royalty so universally adopted by Eastern nations, was generally carried over the king in time of peace and sometimes even in war. In shape it resembled very closely those now in common use; but it is always seen open in the sculptures. It was edged with tassels and usually decorated at the top by a flower or some other ornament. The Greeks used it as a mystic symbol in some of their sacred festivals, and the Romans introduced the custom of hanging an umbrella in the basilican churches as a part of the insignia of office of the judge sitting in the basilica. It is said that on the judgment hall being turned into a church the umbrella remained, and in fact occupied the place of the canopy over thrones and the like; and Beatian, an Italian herald, says that a vermilion umbrella in a field argent symbolises dominion. It is also believed that the cardinal's hat is a modification of the umbrella in the basilican churches. The king of Burma is proud to call himself The Lord of Twenty-four Umbrellas, and the Emperor of China carries that number even to the hunting-field."[1] In Buddhist architecture the 'Wheel of Light' symbolising Buddha is overshadowed by an umbrella, itself adorned with garlands. At Sānchi we find sculptured representations of two and even three umbrellas placed one above the other over the temples, the double and triple canopies of which appear to be fixed to the same handle or staff as in the modern state umbrellas of China and Burma. Thus we have the primary idea of the accumulated honour of stone or metal discs which subsequently became such a prominent feature of Buddhist architecture, culminating in the many-storied pagodas of China and Japan.[2] Similarly in Hindu temples the pinnacle

[1] Rajendra Lāl Mitra, *Indo-Aryans*, i. p. 263.

[2] *Journal of Indian Art and Industry*, xvi., April 1912, p. 3.

often stands on a circular stone base, probably representing an umbrella.

The umbrella of state was apparently not black like its successor of commerce, but of white or another colour, though the colour is seldom recorded. Sometimes it was of peacock's feathers, the symbol of the Indian war-god, and as seen above, in Italy it was of red, the royal colour. It has been suggested that the halo originally represented an umbrella, and there is no reason to doubt that the umbrella was the parent of the state canopy.

7. Significance of the umbrella.

It has been supposed that the reason for carrying the umbrella above the king's head was to veil his eyes from his subjects, and prevent them from being injured by the magical power of his glance.[1] But its appearance on temples perhaps rather militates against this view. Possibly it may have merely served as a protection or covering to the king's head, the head being considered especially sacred as the seat of life. The same idea is perhaps at the root of the objection felt by Hindus to being seen abroad without a covering on the head. It seems likely that the umbrella may have been held to be a representation of the sky or firmament. The Muhammadans conjoined with it an *aftāda* or sun-symbol; this was an imitation of the sun, embroidered in gold upon crimson velvet and fixed on a circular framework which was borne aloft upon a gold or silver staff.[2] Both were carried over the head of any royal personage, and the association favours the idea that the umbrella represents the sky, while the king's head might be considered analogous to the sun. When one of the early Indian monarchs made extensive conquests, the annexed territories were described as being brought under his umbrella; of the king Harsha-Vardhana (606–648 A.D.) it is recorded that he prosecuted a methodical scheme of conquest with the deliberate object of bringing all India under one umbrella, that is, of constituting it into one state. This phrase seems to support the idea that the umbrella symbolised the firmament. Similarly, when Visvāmitra sent beautiful maidens to tempt the good king Harischandra he instructed

[1] Dr. Jevons, *Introduction to the History of Religion*, p. 60.

[2] *Private Life of an Eastern King*, p. 294.

them to try and induce the king to marry them, and if he would not do this, to ask him for the Puchukra Undi or State Umbrella, which was the emblem of the king's protecting power over his kingdom, with the idea that that power would be destroyed by its loss. Chhatrapati or Lord of the Umbrella was the proudest title of an Indian king. When Sivaji was enthroned in 1674 he proclaimed himself as Pinnacle of the Kshatriya race and Lord of the Royal Umbrella. All these instances seem to indicate that some powerful significance, such as that already suggested, attached to the umbrella. Several tribes, as the Gonds and Mundas, have a legend that their earliest king was born of poor parents, and that one day his mother, having left the child under some tree while she went to her work, returned to find a cobra spreading its hood over him. The future royal destiny of the boy was thus predicted. It is commonly said that the cobra spread its hood over the child to guard it from the heat of the sun, but such protection would perhaps scarcely seem very important to such a people as the Gonds, and the mother would naturally also leave the child in the shade. It seems a possible hypothesis that the cobra's hood really symbolised the umbrella, the principal emblem of royal rank, and it was in this way that the child's great destiny was predicted. In this connection it may be noticed that one of the Jain Tirthakārs, Pārasnāth, is represented in sculpture with an umbrella over his head; but some Jains say that the carving above the saint's head is not an umbrella but a cobra's hood. Even after it had ceased to be the exclusive appanage of the king, the umbrella was a sign of noble rank, and not permitted to the commonalty.

The old Anglo-Indian term for an umbrella was 'roundel,' an early English word, applied to a variety of circular objects, as a mat under a dish, or a target, and in its form of 'arundel' to the conical handguard on a lance.[1] An old Indian writer says: "Roundels are in these warm climates very necessary to keep the sun from scorching a man, they may also be serviceable to keep the rain off; most men of account maintain one, two or three roundeliers, whose office is only to attend their master's motion; they are very

[1] *Hobson-Jobson*, *s.v.* 'Roundel.'

light but of exceeding stiffness, being for the most part made of rhinoceros hide, very decently painted and guilded with what flowers they best admire. Exactly in the midst thereof is fixed a smooth handle made of wood, by which the Roundelier doth carry it, holding it a foot or more above his master's head, directing the centre thereof as opposite to the sun as possibly he may. Any man whatever that will go to the charge of it, which is no great matter, may have one or more Katysols to attend him but not a Roundel; unless he be a Governor or one of the Council. The same custom the English hold good amongst their own people, whereby they may be distinguished by the natives."[1] The Katysol was a Chinese paper and bamboo sunshade, and the use of them was not prohibited. It was derived from the Portuguese *quito-sol*, or that which keeps off the sun.[2] An extract from the *Madras Standing Orders*, 1677-78, prescribed: "That except by the members of this Council, those that have formerly been in that quality, Chiefs of Factories, Commanders of Ships out of England, and the Chaplains, Rundells shall not be worn by any men in this town, and by no woman below the degree of Factors' Wives and Ensigns' Wives, except by such as the Governor shall permit."[3] Another writer in 1754 states: "Some years before our arrival in the country, they (the E. I. Co.) found such sumptuary laws so absolutely necessary, that they gave the strictest orders that none of these young gentlemen should be allowed even to hire a Roundel boy, whose business it is to walk by his master and defend him with his Roundel or umbrella from the heat of the sun. A young fellow of humour, upon this last order coming over, altered the form of his Umbrella from a round to a square, called it a Squaredel instead of a Roundel, and insisted that no order yet in force forbade him the use of it."[4] The fact that the Anglo-Indians called the umbrella a roundel and regarded it as a symbol of sovereignty or nobility indicates that it was not yet used in England; and this Mr. Skeat shows to be correct. "The first umbrella used in England by a man in

[1] Old English manuscript quoted by Sir R. Temple in *Ind. Ant.* (December 1904), p. 316.

[2] *Hobson-Jobson*, *s.v.* 'Kittysol.'

[3] *Hobson-Jobson*, *s.v.* 'Roundel.'

[4] *Hobson-Jobson*, *ibidem*.

the open street for protection against rain is usually said to have been that carried by Jonas Hanway, a great traveller, who introduced it on his return from Paris about 1750, some thirty years before it was generally adopted.

"Some kind of umbrella was, however, occasionally used by ladies at least so far back as 1709; and a fact not generally known is that from about the year 1717 onwards, a 'parish' umbrella, resembling the more recent 'family' umbrella of the nineteenth century, was employed by the priest at open-air funerals, as the church accounts of many places testify."[1] This ecclesiastical use of the umbrella may have been derived from its employment as a symbol in Italian churches, as seen above. The word umbrella is derived through the Italian from the Latin *umbra*, shade, and in mediaeval times a state umbrella was carried over the Doge or Duke at Venice on the occasion of any great ceremony.[2]

Even recently it is said that in Saugor no Bania dare go past a Bundela Rājpūt's house without getting down from his pony and folding up his umbrella. In Hindu slang a 'Chhatawāli' or carrier of an umbrella was a term for a smart young man; as in the line, 'An umbrella has two kinds of ribs; two women are quarrelling for the love of him who carries it.' Now that the umbrella is free to all, and may be bought for a rupee or less in the bazār, the prestige which once attached to it has practically disappeared. But some flavour of its old associations may still cling to it in the minds of the sais and ayah who proudly parade to a festival carrying umbrellas spread over them to shade their dusky features from the sun; though the Rāja, in obedience to the dictates of fashion, has discarded the umbrella for a *sola-topi*.

Daharia.[3]—A caste of degraded Rājpūts found in Bilāspur and Raipur, and numbering about 2000 persons. The

1. Origin and traditions.

[1] W. W. Skeat, *The Past at our Doors*.

[2] Skeat, *ibidem*, p. 95.

[3] This article is compiled from papers by Mr. Bahmanji Muncherji, Extra Assistant Commissioner; Mr. Jeorākhan Lāl, Deputy Inspector of Schools, and Pandit Pyāre Lāl Misra, ethnographic clerk. The historical notice is mainly supplied by Mr. Hīra Lāl.

Daharias were originally a clan of Rājpūts but, like several others in the Central Provinces, they have now developed into a caste and marry among themselves, thus transgressing the first rule of Rājpūt exogamy. Colonel Tod included the Daharias among the thirty-six royal races of Rājasthān.[1] Their name is derived from Dāhar or Dāhal, the classical term for the Jubbulpore country at the period when it formed the dominion of the Haihaya or Kālachuri Rājpūt kings of Tripura or Tewar near Jubbulpore. This dynasty had an era of their own, commencing in A.D. 248, and their line continued until the tenth or eleventh century. The Arabian geographer Alberuni (born A.D. 973) mentions the country of Dāhal and its king Gāngeya Deva. His son Karna Daharia is still remembered as the builder of temples in Karanbel and Bilahri in Jubbulpore, and it is from him that the Daharia Rājpūts take their name. The Haihaya dynasty of Ratanpur were related to the Kālachuri kings of Tewar, and under them the ancestors of the Daharia Rājpūts probably migrated from Jubbulpore into Chhattīsgarh. But they themselves have forgotten their illustrious origin, and tell a different story to account for their name. They say that they came from Baghelkhand or Rewah, which may well be correct, as Rewah lies between Chhattīsgarh and Jubbulpore, and a large colony of Kālachuri Rājpūts may still be found about ten miles north-east of Rewah town. The Daharias relate that when Parasurāma, the great Brāhman warrior, was slaying the Kshatriyas, a few of them escaped towards Ratanpur and were camping in the forest by the wayside. Parasurāma came up and asked them who they were, and they said they were *Daharias* or wayfarers, from *dāhar* the Chhattīsgarhi term for a road or path; and thus they successfully escaped the vengeance of Parasurāma. This futile fiction only demonstrates the real ignorance of their Brāhman priests, who, if they had known a little history, need not have had recourse to their invention to furnish the Daharias with a distinguished pedigree. A third derivation is from a word *dahri* or gate, and they say that the name of Dahria or Daharia was conferred on them by Bimbaji Bhonsla, because of the bravery with which they held the gates of Ratanpur against his attack. But history

[1] Tod's *Rājasthān*, i. p. 128.

is against them here, as it records that Ratanpur capitulated to the Marāthas without striking a blow.

2. Sept and subsept.

As already stated, the Daharias were originally a clan of Rājpūts, whose members must take wives or husbands from other clans. They have now become a caste and marry among themselves, but within the caste they still have exogamous groups or septs, several of which are named after Rājpūt clans as Bais, Chandel, Bāghel, Bundela, Mainpuri Chauhān, Parihār, Rāthor and several others. Certain names are not of Rājpūt origin, and probably record the admission of outsiders into the caste. Like the Rājpūts, within the sept they have also subsepts, some of which are taken from the Brāhmans, as Parāsar, Bhāradwāj, Sāndilya, while others are nicknames, as Kachariha (one who does not care about a beating), Atariha, Hiyās and others. The divisions of the septs and subsepts are very confused, and seem to indicate that at different times various foreign elements have been received into the community, including Rājpūts of many different clans. According to rule, a man should not take a wife whose sept or subsept are the same as his own, but this is not adhered to; and in some cases the Daharias, on account of the paucity of their numbers and the difficulty of arranging matches, have been driven to permit the marriage of first cousins, which among proper Rājpūts is forbidden. They also practise hypergamy, as members of the Mainpuri Chauhān, Hiyās, Bisen, Surkhi and Bais septs or subsepts will take girls in marriage from families of other septs, but will not give their daughters to them. This practice leads to polygamy among the five higher septs, whose daughters are all married in their own circle, while in addition they receive girls from the other groups. Members of these latter also consider it an honour to marry a daughter into one of the higher septs, and are willing to pay a considerable price for such a distinction. It seems probable that the small Daraiha caste of Bilāspur are an inferior branch of the Daharias.

3. Social customs.

The Daharias, in theory at any rate, observe the same rules in regard to their women as Brāhmans and Rājpūts. Neither divorce nor the marriage of widows is permitted, and a woman who goes wrong is finally expelled from the

caste. Their social customs resemble those of the higher Hindustāni castes. When the bridegroom starts for the wedding he is dressed in a long white gown reaching to the ankles, with new shoes, and he takes with him a dagger; this serves the double purpose of warding off evil spirits, always prone to attack the bridal party, and also of being a substitute for the bridegroom himself, as in case he should for some unforeseen reason be rendered unable to appear at the ceremony, the bride could be married to the dagger as his representative. It may also be mentioned that, before the bridegroom starts for the wedding, after he has been rubbed with oil and turmeric for five days he is seated on a wooden plank over a hole dug in the courtyard and bathed. He then changes his clothes, and the women bring twenty-one small *chukias* or cups full of water and empty them over him. His head is then covered with a piece of new cloth, and a thread wound round it seven times by a Brāhman. The thread is afterwards removed, and tied round an iron ring with some mango leaves, and this ring forms the *kankan* which is tied to the bridegroom's wrist, a similar one being worn by the bride. Before the wedding the bride goes round to the houses of her friends, accompanied by the women of her party singing songs, and by musicians. At each house the mistress appears with her forehead and the parting of her hair profusely smeared with vermilion. She rubs her forehead against the bride's so as to colour it also with vermilion, which is now considered the symbol of a long and happy married life. The barber's wife applies red paint to the bride's feet, the gardener's wife presents her with a garland of flowers, and the carpenter's wife gives her a new wooden doll. She must also visit the potter's and washerman's wives, whose benisons are essential; they give her a new pot and a little rice respectively. When the bridegroom comes to touch the marriage-shed with his dagger he is resisted by the bride's sister, to whom he must give a rupee as a present. The binding portion of the marriage consists in the couple walking seven times round the marriage-post. At each turn the bridegroom seizes the bride's right toe and with it upsets one of seven little cups of rice placed near the marriage-post. This is probably a

symbol of fertility. After it they worship seven pairs of little wooden boxes smeared with vermilion and called *singhora* and *singhori* as if they were male and female. The bridegroom's father brings two little dough images of Mahādeo and Pārvati as the ideal married pair, and gives them to the couple. The new husband applies vermilion to his wife's forehead, and covers and uncovers her head seven times, to signify to her that, having become a wife, she should henceforth be veiled when she goes abroad. The bride's maid now washes her face, which probably requires it, and the wedding is complete. The Daharias usually have a *guru* or spiritual preceptor, but husband and wife must not have the same one, as in that case they would be in the anomalous position of brother and sister, a *guru's* disciples being looked upon as his children. The Daharias were formerly warriors in the service of the Ratanpur kings, and many families still possess an old sword which they worship on the day of Dasahra. Their names usually end in Singh or Lāl. They are now engaged in cultivation, and many of them are proprietors of villages, and tenants. Some of them are employed as constables and chuprāssies, but few are labourers, as they may not touch the plough with their own hands. They eat the flesh of clean animals, but do not drink liquor, and avoid onions and tomatoes. They have good features and fair complexions, the traces of their Rājpūt blood being quite evident. Brāhmans will take water from them, but they now rank below Rājpūts, on a level with the good cultivating castes.

Dāngi.—A cultivating caste found almost exclusively in the Saugor District, which contained 23,000 persons out of a total of 24,000 of the caste in the Central Provinces in 1911. There are also considerable numbers of them in Rājputāna and Central India, from which localities they probably immigrated into the Saugor District during the eleventh century. The Dāngis were formerly dominant in Saugor, a part of which was called Dāngiwāra after them. The kings of Garhpahra or old Saugor were Dāngis, and their family still remains at the village of Bilehra, which with a few other villages they hold as a revenue-free grant. 1. Origin and traditions.

The name of the caste is variously derived. The traditional story is that the Rājpūt king of Garhpahra detained the palanquins of twenty-two married women of different castes and kept them as his wives. The issue of the illicit intercourse were named Dāngis, and there are thus twenty-two subdivisions of the caste, besides three other subdivisions who are held to be descended from pure Rājpūts. The name is said to be derived from *dāng*, fraud, on account of the above deception. A more plausible derivation is from the Persian *dāng*, a hill, the Dāngis being thus hillmen; and they may not improbably have been a set of robbers and freebooters in the Vindhyan Hills, like the Gūjars and Mewātis in northern India, naturally recruiting their band from all classes of the population, as is shown by ingenious implication in this story itself. '*Khet men bāmi, gaon men Dāngi*,' or 'A Dāngi in the village is like the hole of a snake in one's field' is a proverb which shows the estimation in which they were formerly held. The three higher septs may have been their leaders and may well have been Rājpūts. Since they have settled down as respectable cultivators and enjoy a good repute among their neighbours, the Dāngis have disowned the above story, and now say that they are descended from Rāja Dāng, a Kachhwāha Rājpūt king of Narwar in Central India. Nothing is known of Rāja Dāng except a rude couplet which records how he was cheated by a horse-dealer:

Jitki ghori tit gayi
Dāng hāth karyāri rahi,

'The mare bolted to the seller again, leaving in Dāng's hand nothing except the reins.'

The Dāngis have a more heroic version of this story to the effect that the mare was a fairy of Indra's court, who for some reason had been transformed into this shape and was captured by Rāja Dāng. He refused to give her up to Indra and a battle was about to ensue, when the mare besought them to place her on a pyre and sacrifice her instead of fighting. They agreed to do this, and out of the flames of the pyre the fairy emerged and floated up to heaven, leaving only the reins and bridle of the mare in Rāja Dāng's hand.

Yet a third story is that their original ancestor was Rāja Nipāl Singh of Narwar, and when he was fighting with Indra over the fairy, Krishna came to Indra's assistance. But Nipāl Singh refused to bow down to Krishna, and being annoyed at this and wishing to teach him a lesson the god summoned him to his court. At the gate through which Nipāl Singh had to pass, Krishna fixed a sword at the height of a man's neck, so that he must bend or have his head cut off. But Nipāl Singh saw the trick, and, sitting down, propelled himself through the doorway with his head erect. The outwitted god remarked, '*Tum bare dāndi ho*,' or 'You are very cunning,' and the name Dāndi stuck to Nipāl Singh and was afterwards corrupted to Dāngi. There can be little doubt that the caste are an offshoot of Rājpūts of impure blood, and with a large admixture of other classes of the population. Some of their sept names indicate their mixed descent, as Rakhya, born of a potter woman, Dhoniya, born of a washerwoman, and Pavniya, born of a weaver woman. In past times the Dāngis served in the Rājpūt and Marātha armies, and a small isolated colony of them is found in one village of Indora in the Nāgpur District, the descendants of Dāngis who engaged in military service under the Bhonsla kings.

2. Caste sub-divisions.

The Dāngis have no subcastes distinguished by separate names, but they are divided into three classes, among whom the principle of hypergamy prevails. As already seen, there were formerly twenty-five clans, of whom the three highest, the Nahonias, Bhadonias and Nadias, claimed to be pure Rājpūts. The other twenty-two clans are known as Baīsa (22) or Prithwipat Dāngis, after the king who is supposed to have been the ancestor of all the clans. Each of his twenty-two wives is said to have been given a village for her maintenance, and the clans are named after these villages. But there are now only thirteen of these local clans left, and below them is a miscellaneous group of clans, representing apparently later accretions to the caste. Some of them are named from the places from which they came, as Mahobia, from Mahoba, Narwaria, from Narwar, and so on. The Solakhia sept is named after the Solanki Rājpūts, of whom they may be the partly illegitimate descendants. The Parnāmi sept are

apparently those who have the creed of the Dhāmis, the followers of Prānnāth of Panna. And as already seen, some are named from women of low caste, from whom by Dāngi fathers they are supposed to be descended. The whole number of septs is thus divided into three groups, the highest containing the three quasi-Rājpūt septs already mentioned, the next highest the thirteen septs of Prithwipat Dāngis, and the lowest all the other septs. Pure Rājpūts will take daughters in marriage from the highest group, and this in turn takes girls of the Prithwipat Dāngis of the thirteen clans, though neither will give daughters in return; and the Prithwipat Dāngis will similarly accept the daughters of the miscellaneous septs below them in marriage with their sons. Matches are, however, not generally arranged according to the above system of hypergamy, but each group marries among its own members. Girls who are married into a higher group have to be given a larger dowry, the fathers often being willing to pay Rs. 500 or Rs. 1000 for the social distinction which such an alliance confers on the family. Among the highest septs there is a further difference between those whose ancestors accepted food from Rāja Jai Singh, the founder of Jaisinghnagar, and those who refused it. The former are called Sakrodia or those who ate the leavings of others, and the latter *Deotaon ki sansār*, or the divine Dāngis. Pure Rājpūts will take daughters only from the members of the latter group in each sept. Marriage within the sept or *bainḳ* is prohibited, and as a rule a man does not marry a wife belonging to the same sept as his mother or grandmother. Marriage by exchange also is not allowed, that is, a girl cannot be married into the same family as that in which her brother has married.

3. Marriage.

Girls are generally married between seven and twelve and boys between ten and twenty, but no stigma attaches to a family allowing an unmarried girl to exceed the age of puberty. The bridegroom should always be older than the bride. Matches are arranged by the parents, the horoscopes of the children being compared among the well-to-do. The zodiacal sign of the boy's horoscope should be stronger than that of the girl's, so that she may be submissive to

him in after-life. Thus a girl whose zodiac sign is the lion should not be married to a boy whose sign is the ram, because in that case the wife would dominate the husband. There is no special rule as to the time of the betrothal, and the ceremony is very simple, consisting in the presentation of a cocoanut by the bride's father to the bridegroom's father, and the distribution of sweets to the caste-fellows. The betrothal is not considered to have any particularly binding force and either party may break through it. Among the Dāngis a bridegroom-price is usually paid, which varies according to the social respectability of the boy's sept, as much as Rs. 2000 having been given for a bridegroom of higher class according to the rule of hypergamy already described. But no value is placed on educational qualifications, as is the case among Brāhmans and Kāyasths. The marriage ceremony is conducted according to the ritual prevalent in the northern Districts, and presents no special features. Two feasts are given by the bride's father to the caste-fellows, one consisting of *katchi* food or that which is cooked with water, and another of *pakki* food cooked with *ghī* (butter). If the bride is of marriageable age the *gauna* or sending away ceremony is performed at once, otherwise it takes place in the third or fifth year after marriage. At the *gauna* ceremony the bride's cloth is tied to that of the bridegroom, and they change seats. Widow-marriage is not fashionable, and the caste say that it is not permitted, but several instances are known of its having occurred. Divorce is not allowed, and a woman who goes wrong is finally expelled from the caste. Polygamy is allowed, and many well-to-do persons have more than one wife.

4. Religious and social customs.

The Dāngis pay special reverence to the goddess Durga or Devi as the presiding deity of war. They worship her during the months of Kunwār (September) and Chait (March), and at the same time pay reverence to their weapons of war, their swords and guns, or if they have not got these, to knives and spears. They burn their dead, but children are usually buried. They observe mourning for three days for a child and for ten days for an adult, and on the 13th day the caste-fellows are feasted. Their family priests, who are

Jijhotia Brāhmans, used formerly to shave the head and beard when a death occurred among their clients as if they belonged to the family, but this practice was considered derogatory by other Brāhmans, and they have now stopped it. The Dāngis perform the *shrādhh* ceremony in the month of Kunwār. The caste wear the sacred thread, but it is said that they were formerly not allowed to do so in Bundelkhand. They eat fish and flesh, including that of wild boars, but not fowls or beef, and they do not drink liquor. They take *pakki* food or that cooked without water from Kāyasths and Gahoi Banias, and *katchi* food, cooked with water, from Jijhotia and Sanādhya Brāhmans. Jijhotia Brāhmans formerly took *pakki* food from Dāngis, but have now ceased to do so. The Dāngis require the services of Brāhmans at all ceremonies. They have a caste *panchāyat* or committee. A person who changes his religion or eats with a low caste is permanently expelled, while temporary exclusion is awarded for the usual delinquencies. In the case of the more serious offences, as murder or killing of a cow, the culprit must purify himself by a pilgrimage to a sacred river.

5. Occupation and character.

The Dāngis were formerly, as already stated, of a quarrelsome temperament, but they have now settled down and, though spirited, are of a good disposition, and hard-working cultivators. They rank slightly above the representative cultivating castes owing to their former dominant position, and are still considered to have a good conceit of themselves, according to the saying:

Tin men neh terah men,
Mirdang bajāwe dere men,

or 'Though he belong neither to the three septs nor the thirteen septs, yet the Dāngi blows his own trumpet in his own house.' They are still, too, of a fiery disposition, and it is said that the favourite dish of gram-flour cooked with curds, which is known as *karhi*, is never served at their weddings. Because the word *karhi* also signifies the coming out of a sword from its sheath, and when addressed to another man has the equivalent of the English word 'Draw' in the duelling days. So if one Dāngi said it to another, meaning to ask him for the dish, it might result in

a fight. They are very backward in respect of education and set no store by it. They consider their traditional occupation to be military service, but nearly all of them are now engaged in agriculture. At the census of 1901 over 2000 were returned as supported by the ownership of land and 3000 as labourers and farmservants. Practically all the remainder are tenants. They are industrious, and their women work in the fields. The only crops which they object to grow are *kusum* or safflower and *san*-hemp. The Nahonia Dāngis, being the highest subcaste, refuse to sell milk or *ghī*. The men usually have Singh as a termination to their names, like Rājpūts. Their dress and ornaments are of the type common in the northern Districts. The women tattoo their bodies.

Dāngri.[1]—A small caste of melon and vegetable growers, whose name is derived from *dāngar* or *dāngra*, a water-melon. They reside in the Wardha and Bhandāra Districts, and numbered about 1800 persons in 1911. The caste is a mixed one of functional origin, and appears to be an offshoot from the Kunbis with additions from other sources. In Wardha they say that their ancestor was one of two brothers to whom Mahādeo gave the seeds of a juāri plant and a water-melon respectively for sowing. The former became the ancestor of the Kunbis and the latter of the Dāngris. On one occasion when Mahādeo, assuming the guise of a beggar, asked the Dāngri brother for a water-melon, he refused to give it, and on this account his descendants were condemned to perpetual poverty. In fact, the Dāngris, like the other market-gardening castes, are badly off, possibly on account of their common habit of marrying a number of wives, whom they utilise as labourers in their vegetable gardens; for though a wife is better than a hired labourer for their particular method of cultivation, where supervision is difficult and the master may be put to serious loss from bad work and petty pilfering, while there is also much scope for women workers; yet on the other hand polygamy tends to the breeding of family quarrels and to

[1] This article is based on notes taken by Pandit Pyāre Lāl Misra in Wardha, and Mr. Hirā Lāl in Bhandāra.

excessive subdivision of property. The close personal supervision which is requisite perhaps also renders it especially difficult to carry on the business of market-gardening on a large scale. In any case the agricultural holdings of the Mālis and Dāngris are as a rule very small. The conclusion indicated by the above story that the Dāngris are an offshoot from the Kunbi caste of cultivators appears to be correct; and it is supported by the fact that they will accept food cooked with water from the Baone Kunbis. But their subcastes show that even this small body is of very heterogeneous composition; for they are divided into the Teli, the Kalār, the Kunbi and the Gādiwān Dāngris, thus showing that the caste has received recruits from the Telis or oilmen and the Kalārs or liquor-sellers. The Gādiwān, as their name denotes, are a separate section who have adopted the comparatively novel occupation of cart-driving for a livelihood. In Wardha there is also a small class of Pānibhar or waterman Dāngris who are employed as water-bearers, this occupation arising not unnaturally from that of growing melons and other crops in river-beds. And a few members of the caste have taken to working in iron. The bulk of the Dāngris, however, grow melons, chillies and brinjals on the banks or in the beds of rivers; but as the melon crop is raised in a period of six weeks during the hot season, they can also undertake some ordinary cultivation. When the melons ripen the first fruits are offered to Mahādeo and given to a Brāhman to ensure the success of the crop. When the melon plants are in flower, a woman must not enter the field during the period of her monthly impurity, as it is believed that she would cause the crop to wither. While it may safely be assumed that the Dāngris originated from the great Kunbi caste, it may be noted that some of them tell a story to the effect that their original home was Benāres, and that they came from there into the Central Provinces; hence they call themselves Kāshi Dāngri, Kāshi being the classical name for Benāres. This legend appears to be entirely without foundation, as their family names, speech and customs are alike of purely Marāthi origin. But it is found among other castes also that they like to pretend that they came from Benāres, the most sacred centre of Hin-

duism. The social customs of the Dāngris resemble those of the Kunbis, and it is unnecessary to describe them in detail. Before their weddings they have a curious ceremony known as Dewat Pūja. The father of the bridegroom, with an axe over his shoulder and accompanied by his wife, goes to a well or a stream. Here they clean a small space with cow-dung and make an offering of rice, flowers, turmeric and incense, after which the man, breaking his bangle from off his wrist, throws it into the water, apparently as a propitiatory offering for the success of the marriage. It is not stated what the bangle is made of, but it may be assumed that a valuable one would not thus be thrown away. As among some of the other Marātha castes, the bridegroom must be wrapped in a blanket on his journey to the bride's village. If a bachelor desires to espouse a widow he must first go through the ceremony of marriage with a swallow-wort plant. Polygamy is freely permitted, and some Dāngris are known to have as many as five wives. As already stated, wives are of great assistance in gardening work, which demands much hand-labour. Divorce and the remarriage of widows are allowed. The Dāngris commonly bury the dead, and they place cotton leaves over the eyes and ears of the corpse. In Bhandāra they say that this is done when it is believed the dead person was possessed by an evil spirit, and there is possibly some idea of preventing the escape of the spirit from the body. In Wardha the Dāngris have rather a bad reputation, and a saying current about them is '*Dāngri beta puha chor*,' or 'A Dāngri will steal even a shred of cotton'; but this may be a libel.

DARZI

LIST OF PARAGRAPHS

1. General notice.

Darzi, Shimpi, Chhīpi, Sūji.—The occupational caste of tailors. In 1911 a total of 51,000 persons were returned as belonging to the caste in the Central Provinces and Berār. The Darzis are an urban caste and are most numerous in Districts with large towns. Mr. Crooke derives the word Darzi from the Persian *darz*, meaning a seam. The name Sūji from *sui*, a needle, was formerly more common. Shimpi is the Marātha name, and Chhīpi, from Chhīpa a calico-printer or dyer, is another name used for the caste, probably because it is largely recruited from the Chhīpas. In Bombay they say that when Parasurāma was destroying the Kshatriyas, two Rājpūt brothers hid themselves in a temple and were protected by the priest, who set one of them to sew dresses for the idol and the other to dye and stamp them. The first brother was called Chhīpi and from him the Darzis are descended, the name being corrupted to Shimpi, and the second was called Chhīpa and was the ancestor of the dyers. The common title of the Darzis is Khalīfa, an Arabic word meaning 'The Successor of the Prophet.' Colonel Temple says that it is not confined to them but is also used by barbers, cooks and monitors in schools.[1] The caste is of comparatively recent formation. In fact Sir D. Ibbetson wrote[2] that "Darzi, or its Hindi equivalent Sūji, is purely

[1] *Proper Names of the Punjābis*, p. 74.
[2] *Punjab Census Report* (1881), para. 645.

an occupational term, and though there is a Darzi guild in every town, there is no Darzi caste in the proper acceptation of the word. The greater number of Darzis belong perhaps to the Dhobi and Chhīmba castes, more especially to the latter."

2. Sub-divisions.

The Darzis, however, are now recognised as a distinct caste, but their mixed origin is shown by the names of their subcastes and exogamous sections. Thus they have a Bāman subdivision named after the Brāhman caste. These will not take food from any other caste except Brāhmans and are probably an offshoot from them. They are considered to be the highest subdivision, and next to them come the Rai or Rāj Darzis. Another subcaste is named Kaithia, after the Kāyasths, and a third Srivāstab, which is the name of a well-known subcaste of Kāyasths derived from the town of Srāvasti, now Sahet Mahet in the Gonda District.[1] In Betūl the Srivāstab Darzis are reported to forbid the remarriage of widows, thus showing that they desire to live up to their distinguished ancestry. A third subcaste is known as Chamarua and appears to be derived from the Chamārs. Other subcastes are of the territorial type as Mālwi, Khāndeshi, Chhattīsgarhi, Mathuria and so on, and the section or family names are usually taken from villages. Among them, however, we find Jugia from Jogi, Thākur or Rājpūt, Gūjar, Khawās or barber, and Baroni, the title of a female Dhīmar. Mr. Crooke gives several other names.

3. Sewn clothes not formerly worn.

It may thus reasonably be concluded that the Darzis are a caste of comparatively recent origin, and the explanation is probably that the use of the needle and thread in making clothes is a new fashion. Buchanan remarks: "The needle indeed seems to have been totally unknown to the Hindus, and I have not been able to learn any Hindi word for sewing except that used to express passing the shuttle in the act of weaving. . . ." "Cloth composed of several pieces sewn together is an abomination to the Hindus, so that every woman of rank when she eats, cooks or prays, must lay aside her petticoat and retain only the wrapper made without the use of scissors or needle"; and again, "The dress of the Hindu men of rank has become nearly the same with

[1] Crooke's *Tribes and Castes*, art. Darzi.

that of the Muhammadans[1] who did not allow any officer employed by them to appear at their *levées* (Durbars) except in proper dress. At home, however, the Hindu men, and on all occasions their women, retain almost entirely their native dress, which consists of various pieces of cloth wrapped round them without having been sewn together in any form, and only kept in their place by having their ends thrust under the folds." And elsewhere he states: "The flowering of cotton cloth with the needle has given a good deal of employment to the Muhammadan women of Maldeh as the needle has never been used by the Hindus."[2] Darzi, as has been seen, is a Persian word, and in northern India many tailors are Muhammadans. And it seems, therefore, a possible hypothesis that the needle and the art of sewing were brought into general use by the Moslem invaders. It is true that in his *Indo-Aryans*[3] Mr. Rājendra Lāl Mitra combats this hypothesis and demonstrates that made-up clothes were known to the Aryans of the Rig-Veda and are found in early statuary. But he admits that the instances are not numerous, and it seems likely that the use of such clothes may have been confined to royal and aristocratic families. It is possible also that the Scythian invasions of the fifth century brought about a partial relapse from civilisation, during which certain arts and industries, and among them that of cutting and sewing cloth, were partially or completely lost. The tailor is not the familiar figure in Hindu social life that he is, for example, in England. Here he is traditionally an object or butt for ridicule as in the saying, 'Nine tailors make a man,' and so on; and his weakness is no doubt supposed to be due to the fact that he pursues a sedentary indoor occupation and one more adapted to women than men, the needle being essentially a feminine implement. A similar ridicule, based no doubt on exactly the same grounds, attaches in India to the village weaver, as is evidenced by the proverbs given in the articles on Bhulia, Kori, and Jolāha. No reason exists probably for the contempt in which the weaver class is held other than that their work is considered to be more fitting for women than men. Thus in India the

[1] Buchanan's *Eastern India*, Martin's edition, ii. pp. 417, 699.
[2] *Ibidem*, p. 977. [3] Vol. i. pp. 178-184.

weaver appears to take the place of the tailor, and this leads to the conclusion that woven and not sewn clothes have always been commonly worn.

In the Central Provinces, at least, the Darzi caste is practically confined to the towns, and though cotton jackets are worn even by labourers and shirts by the better-to-do, these are usually bought ready-made at the more important markets. Women, more conservative in their dress than men, have only one garment prepared with the needle, the small bodice known as *choli* or *angia*. And in Chhattīsgarh, a landlocked tract very backward in civilisation, the *choli* has hitherto not been worn and is only now being introduced. Though he first copied the Muhammadan and now shows a partiality for the English style of dress for outdoor use, the Hindu when indoors still reverts to the one cloth round the waist and a second over the shoulders, which was probably once the regular garb of his countrymen. For meals the latter is discarded, and this costume, so strange to English ideas, while partly based on considerations of ceremonial purity, may also be due to a conservative adherence to the ancient fashion, when sewn clothes were not worn. It is noticeable also that high-caste Hindus, though they may wear a coat of cloth or tasar silk and cotton trousers, copying the English, still often carry the *dupatta* or shoulder-cloth hanging round the neck. This now appears a useless encumbrance, but may be the relic of the old body-cloth and therefore interesting as a survival in dress, like the buttons on the back of our tail-coats to which the flaps were once hooked up for riding, or the seams on the backs of gloves, a relic of the time when the glove consisted simply of finger-lengths sewn together.[1] More recently the *dupatta* has been made to fulfil the function of a pocket-handkerchief, while the educated are now discarding the *dupatta* and carry their handkerchiefs in their pockets. The old dress of ceremony for landowners is the *angarkha*, a long coat reaching to the knees and with flaps folding over the breast and tied with strings. This is worn with pyjamas and is probably the Muhammadan ceremonial costume as remarked by Buchanan. In its correct form, at least it has no buttons,

[1] Webb's *Heritage of Dress*, p. 33.

and recalls the time when a similar state of things prevailed in English dress and the 'trussing of his points' was a laborious daily task for every English gentleman. The *ghundis* or small pieces of cloth made up into a ball, which were the precursors of the button, may still be seen on the cotton coats of rustics in the rural area.

The substitution of clothes cut and sewn to fit the body for draped clothes is a matter of regret from an artistic or picturesque point of view, as the latter have usually a more graceful appearance. This is shown by the difficulty of reproducing modern clothes in statuary, trousers being usually the despair of the sculptor. But sewn clothes, when once introduced, must always prevail from considerations of comfort. When a Hindu pulls his *dhoti* or loin-cloth up his legs and tucks it in round his hips in order to run or play a game he presumably performs the act described in the Bible as 'girding up his loins.'

4. Occupation.

The social customs of the Darzis present no features of special interest and resemble those of the lower castes in their locality. They rank below the cultivating castes, and Brāhmans will not take water from their hands. Though not often employed by the Hindu villager the Darzi is to Europeans one of the best known of all castes. He is on the whole a capable workman and especially good at copying from a pattern. His proficiency in this respect attracted notice so long ago as 1689, as shown in an interesting quotation in the *Bombay Gazetteer* referring to the tailors of Surat:[1] "The tailors here fashion clothes for the Europeans, either men or women, according to every mode that prevails, and fit up the commodes and towering head-dresses for the women with as much skill as if they had been an Indian fashion, or themselves had been apprenticed at the Royal Exchange. (The commode was a wire structure to raise the cap and hair.)" Since then the Darzi has no doubt copied in turn all the changes of English fashions. He is a familiar figure in the veranda of the houses of Europeans, and his idiosyncrasies have been delightfully described by Eha in *Behind the Bungalow*.

[1] *Bombay Gazetteer, Hindus of Gujarāt*, p. 180, quoting from Ovington, *Voyage to Surat*, p. 280.

His needles and pins are stuck into the folds of his turban, and Eha says that he is bandy-legged because of the position in which he squats on his feet while sewing. In Gujarāt the tailor is often employed in native households. "Though even in well-to-do families," Mr. Bhimbhai Kirpāram writes,[1] "women sew their bodices and young children's clothes for everyday wear, every family has its own tailor. As a rule tailors sew in their own houses, and in the tailor's shop may be seen workmen squatting in rows on a palm-leaf mat or on cotton-stuffed quilts. The wives and sons' wives of the head of the establishment sit and work in the shop along with the men. Their busy time is during the marriage season from November to June. A village tailor is paid either in cash or grain and is not infrequently a member of the village establishment. During the rains, the tailor's slack season, he supplements his earnings by tillage, holding land which Government has continued to him on payment of one-half the ordinary rental. In south Gujarāt, in the absence of Brāhmans, a Darzi officiates at Bhāwad marriages, and in some Brāhman marriages a Darzi is called with some ceremony to sew a bodice for the bride. On the other hand, in the Pānch Mahals and Rewa Kantha, besides tailoring Darzis blow trumpets at marriage and other processions and hold so low a position that even Dhedas object to eat their food." It seems clear that in Gujarāt the Darzi caste is of older standing than in northern India, and it is possible that the art of sewing may have been acquired through the sea trade which was carried on between the western coast and Arabia and the Persian Gulf. Here the Darzi has become a village menial, which he is not recorded as being in any other part of India.

5. Religion.

Like the weaver, the Darzi is of a somewhat religious turn of mind, probably on account of his sedentary calling which gives him plenty of time for reflection. Many of them belong to the Nāmdeo sect, originated by a Chhīpa or dyer, Nāmdeo Sādhu. Nāmdeo is said to have been a contemporary of Kabīr and to have flourished in the twelfth or thirteenth century. He was a great worshipper of the

[1] *Bombay Gazetteer, Hindus of Gujarāt*, p. 180.

god Vithoba of Pandharpur and is considered by the Marāthas to be their oldest writer, being the author of many Abhangs, or sacred hymns.[1] He preached the unity of God, recognising apparently Vithoba or Vishnu as the one deity, and the uselessness of ceremonial. His followers are mainly Dhobis and Chhīpas, the two principal castes from whom the Darzis have originated.[2] Nāmdeo's sect was thus apparently a protest on the part of the Chhīpas and Dhobis against their inferior position in the caste system and the tyranny of the Brāhmans, and resembled the spiritual revolt of the weavers under Kabīr and of the Chamārs under Ghāsi Dās and Jagjīwan Dās.

In Berār it is stated[3] that "the Simpi caste has twelve and a half divisions; of these the chief are known as the Jain, Marāthi and Telugu Simpis. The Jain Simpis claim the hero Riminath as a caste-fellow, while the Marāthas are often Lingāyats and the Telugu division generally Vaishnavas." Before beginning work in the morning the Darzi bows to his scissors or needle and prays to them for his livelihood for that day.

The Darzi's occupation, Mr. Crooke remarks, is a poor one and held rather in contempt. The village proverb runs, '*Darzi ka pūt jab tak jīta tab tak sīta*,' 'The tailor's boy will do nothing but sew all his life long.' Another somewhat more complimentary saying is, '*Tanak si suiya tak tak kare aur lākh taka ko banj kare*,' or 'The tiny needle goes *tuk tuk*, and makes merchandise worth a lakh of rupees.' The Hindustani version of both proverbs is obviously intended to give the sound of a needle passing through cloth, and it is possible that our word 'tuck' has the same origin.

1. General notice.

Dewār.[4]—(Derived from Devi, whom they worship, or from Diābār, 'One who lights a lamp,' because they always practise magic with a lighted lamp.) A Dravidian caste of beggars and musicians. They numbered about 2500 persons

[1] *Bombay Gazetteer, Nasik*, p. 50.

[2] According to another account Nāmdeo belonged to Mārwār. Mr. Maclagan's *Punjab Census Report* (1891), p. 144.

[3] *Berār Census Report* (1881), para. 231.

[4] This article is partly based on a note by Mr. Gokul Prasād, Tahsīldār, Dhamtari.

in 1911 and are residents of the Chhattīsgarh plain. The Dewārs themselves trace their origin from a Binjhia named Gopāl Rai, who accompanied Rāja Kalyān Sai of Ratanpur on a visit to the Court of Delhi in Akbār's time. Gopāl Rai was a great wrestler, and while at Delhi he seized and held a *mast* elephant belonging to the Emperor. When the latter heard of it he ordered a wrestling match to be arranged between Gopāl Rai and his own champion wrestler. Gopāl Rai defeated and killed his opponent, and Kalyān Sai ordered him to compose a triumphal song and sing it in honour of the occasion. He composed his song in favour of Devi Maha Mai, or Devi the Great Mother, and the composition and recitation of similar songs has ever since been the profession of his descendants the Dewārs. The caste is, as is shown by the names of its sections, of mixed origin, and its members are the descendants of Gonds and Kawars reinforced probably by persons who have been expelled from their own caste and have become Dewārs. They will still admit persons of any caste except the very lowest.

a. Subdivisions.

The caste has two principal divisions according to locality, named Raipūria and Ratanpūria, Raipur and Ratanpur having been formerly the two principal towns of Chhattīsgarh. Within these are several other local subdivisions, *e.g.* Navāgarhia or those belonging to Nawāgarh in Bilāspur, Sonākhania from Sonākhān south of the Mahānadi, Chātarrājiha from Chāter Rāj, in Raipur, and Sārangarhia from Sārangarh State. Some other divisions are either occupational or social; thus the Baghurra Dewārs are those who tame tigers and usually live in the direction of Bastar, the Baipāri Dewārs are petty traders in brass or pewter ornaments which they sell to Banjāra women, and the Lohār and Jogi Dewārs may be so called either because their ancestors belonged to these castes, or because they have adopted the profession of blacksmiths and beggars respectively. Probably both reasons are partly applicable. These subdivisions are not strictly endogamous, but show a tendency to become so. The two main subcastes, Raipūria and Ratanpūria, are distinguished by the musical instruments which they play on while begging. That of the Raipūrias is a sort of rude

fiddle called *sārangi*, which has a cocoanut shell as a resonator with horsehair strings, and is played with a bow. The Ratanpūrias have an instrument called *dhungru*, which consists of a piece of bamboo about three feet long with a hollow gourd as a resonator and catgut strings. In the latter the resonator is held uppermost and rests against the shoulder of the player, while in the former it is at the lower end and is placed against his waist. The section names of the Dewārs are almost all of Dravidian origin. Sonwānia, Markām, Marai, Dhurwa, Ojha, Netām, Salām, Katlām and Jagat are the names of well-known Gond septs which are also possessed by the Dewārs, and Telāsi, Karsayal, Son-Mungir and others are Kawar septs which they have adopted. They admit that their ancestors were members of these septs among the Gonds and Kawars. Where the name of the ancestor has a meaning which they understand, some totemistic observances survive. Thus the members of the Karsayal sept will not kill or eat a deer. The septs are exogamous, but there is no other restriction on marriage and the union of first cousins is permissible.

3. Marriage customs.

Adult marriage is usual, and if a husband cannot be found for a girl who has reached maturity she is given to her sister's husband as a second wife, or to any other married person who will take her and give a feast to the caste. In some localities the boy who is to be married is sent with a few relatives to the girl's house. On arrival he places a pot of wine and a nut before the girl's father, who, if he is willing to carry out the marriage, orders the nut to be pounded up. This is always done by a member of the Sonwāni sept, a similar respect being paid to this sept among some of the Dravidian tribes. The foreheads of the betrothed couple are smeared with the nut and with some yellow-coloured rice and they bow low to the elders of the caste. Usually a bride-price of Rs. 5 or 10 is then paid to the parents of the girl together with two pieces of cloth intended for their use. A feast follows, which consists merely of the distribution of uncooked food, as the Dewārs, like some other low castes, will not take cooked food from each other. Pork and wine are essential ingredients in the feast or the ceremony cannot be completed. If liquor is not available, water from

the house of a Kalār (distiller) will do instead, but there is no substitute for pork. This, however, is as a rule easily supplied as nearly all the Dewārs keep pigs, which are retailed to the Gonds for their sacrifices. The marriage ceremony is performed within three or four months at most after the betrothal. Before entering the Mandwa or marriage-shed the bridegroom must place a jar of liquor in front of his prospective father-in-law. The bridegroom must also place a ring on the little finger of the bride's right hand, while she resists him as much as she can, her hand having previously been smeared with castor oil in order to make the task more difficult. Before taking the bride away the new husband must pay her father Rs. 20, and if he cannot do this, and in default of arrangements for remission which are sometimes made, must remain domiciled in his house for a certain period. As the bride is usually adult there is no necessity for a *gauna* ceremony, and she leaves for her husband's house once for all. Thereafter when she visits the house of her parents she does so as a stranger, and they will not accept cooked food at her hands nor she at theirs. Neither will her husband's parents accept food from her, and each couple with their unmarried children form an exclusive group in this respect. Such a practice is found only among the low castes of mixed origin where nobody is certain of his neighbour's standing. If a woman has gone wrong before marriage, most of the ceremonies are omitted. In such a case the bridegroom catches hold of the bride by the hair and gives her a blow by way of punishment for her sin, and they then walk seven times round the sacred pole, the whole ceremony taking less than an hour. The bride-price is under these circumstances reduced to Rs. 15. Widow-marriage is permitted, and while in some localities the new husband need give nothing, in others he must pay as much as Rs. 50 to the relatives of the deceased husband. If a woman runs away from her husband to another man, the latter must pay to the husband double the ordinary amount payable for a widow. If he cannot afford this, he must return the woman with Rs. 10 as compensation for the wrong he has done. The Dewārs are also reported to have the practice of mortgaging their

wives or making them over temporarily to a creditor in return for a loan. Divorce is allowed for the usual causes and by mutual consent. The husband must give a feast to the caste, which is looked on as the funeral ceremony of the woman so far as he is concerned ; thereafter she is dead to him and he cannot marry her again on pain of the permanent exclusion of both from the caste. But a divorced woman can marry any other Dewār. Polygamy is freely allowed.

4. Religion and social practices.

The Dewārs especially worship Devi Maha Mai and Dūlha Deo. To the former they offer a she-goat and to the latter a he-goat which must be of a dark colour. They worship their *dhungru* or musical instrument on the day of Dasahra. They consider the sun and the moon to be brother and sister, and both to be manifestations of the deity. They bury their dead, but those who are in good circumstances dig up the bones after a year or two and burn them, taking the ashes to a sacred river. Mourning lasts for seven or ten days according as the deceased is unmarried or married, and during this time they abjure flesh and oil. Their social rules are peculiar. Though considered impure by the higher castes, they will not take cooked food from a Brāhman, whom they call a Kumhāti Kīda, or an insect which effects the metamorphosis of others into his own form, and who will therefore change them into his own caste. Nor will they take cooked food from members of their own caste, but they accept it from several of the lower castes including Gonds, whose leavings they will eat. This is probably because they beg from Gonds and attend their weddings. They keep pigs and pork is their favourite food, but they do not eat beef. They have a tribal council with a headman called Gaontia or Jemādar, who always belongs either to the Sonwāni or Telāsi section. Among offences for which a man is temporarily put out of caste is that of naming his younger brother's wife. He must also abstain from going into her room or touching her clothes. This rule does not apply to an elder brother's wife.

5. Occupation.

The Dewārs are professional beggars, and play on the musical instruments called *dhungru* and *sārangi* which have already been described. The Ratanpūrias usually celebrate in an exaggerated style the praises of Gopāl Rai, their

mythical ancestor. One of his exploits was to sever with a single sword-stroke the stalk of a plantain inside which the Emperor of Delhi had caused a solid bar of iron to be placed. The Raipūrias prefer a song, called Gujrīgīt, about curds and milk. They also sing various songs relating how a woman is beloved by a Rāja who tries to seduce her, but her chastity is miraculously saved by some curious combination of circumstances. They exorcise ghosts, train monkeys, bears and tigers for exhibition, and sell ornaments of base metal. In Raipur the men take about performing monkeys and the women do tattooing, for which they usually receive payment in the shape of an old or new cloth. A few have settled down to cultivation, but as a rule they are wanderers, carrying from place to place their scanty outfit of a small tent and mattress, both made of old rags, and a few vessels. They meet at central villages during the Holi festival. The family is restricted to the parents and unmarried children, separation usually taking place on marriage.

Dhākar.[1]—A small caste belonging solely to the Bastar State. In 1911 they numbered 5500 persons in Bastar, and it is noticeable that there were nearly twice as many women as men. The term Dhākar connotes a man of illegitimate descent and is applied to the Kirārs of the Central Provinces and perhaps to other castes of mixed Rājpūt origin. But in Bastar it is the special designation of a considerable class of persons who are the descendants of alliances between Brāhman and Rājpūt immigrants and women of the indigenous tribes. They are divided, like the Halbas, into two groups—Purāit or pure, and Surāit or mixed. The son of a Brāhman or Rājpūt father by a Rāwat (herdsman) or Halba mother is a Purāit, but one born from a woman of the Muria, Marār, Nai or Kalār castes is a Surāit. But these latter can become Purāits after two or three generations, and the same rule applies to the son of a Dhākar father by a Halba or Rāwat woman, who also ranks in the first place as a Surāit. Descendants of a Dhākar father by a Muria or other low-caste woman, however, always remain Surāits. 1. Origin and sub-divisions.

[1] This article is based entirely on a paper by Rai Bahādur Panda Baijnāth, Superintendent, Bastar State.

The Purāits and Surāits form endogamous groups, and the latter will accept cooked food from the former. The more respectable Dhākars round Jagdalpur are now tending, however, to call themselves Rājpūts and refuse to admit any one of mixed birth into their community.

One legend of their origin is that the first Dhākar was the offspring of a Brāhman cook of the Rāja of Bastar with a Kosaria Rāwat woman; and though this is discredited by the Dhākars it is probably a fairly correct version of the facts. An inferior branch of the caste exists which is known as Chikrasār; it is related of them that their ancestors once went out hunting and set the forest on fire as a method of driving the game, as they occasionally do still. They came across the roasted body of a dog in the forest and ate it without knowing what animal it was. In the stomach, however, some cooked rice was found, and hence it was known as a dog and they were branded as dog-eaters. As a penalty the Rāja imposed on them the duty of thatching a hut for him at the Dasahra festival, which their descendants still perform. The other Dhākars refuse to marry or eat with them, and it is clear from the custom of thatching the Rāja's hut that they are a primitive and jungly branch of the caste.

2. Marriage.

If a girl becomes with child by a member of the caste she is made over to him without a marriage, or to the man to whom she was previously betrothed if he is still willing to take her. Neither is she expelled if the same event occurs with a man of any higher caste, but if he be of lower caste she is thrown out. Marriages are usually arranged by the parents but an adult girl may choose her own husband, and she is then wedded to him with abbreviated rites so that her family may avoid the disgrace of her entering his house like a widow or kept woman. Formerly a Dhākar might marry his granddaughter, but this is no longer done. When the signs of puberty first appear in a girl she is secluded and must not see or be seen by any man. They think that the souls of dead ancestors are reborn in children, and if a child refuses to suck they ask which of their ancestors he is and what he wants, or they offer it some present such as a silver bangle, and if the child then takes to the breast they give away the bangle to a Brāhman. The sixth day after a child is born

the paternal aunt prepares lamp-black from a lamp fed with melted butter and rubs it on the child's eyes and receives a small present.

3. Funeral rites.

The period of mourning or impurity after a death must terminate with a feast to the caste-men, and it continues until this is given. Consequently the other caste-men subscribe for a poor member, so that he may give the feast and resume his ordinary avocations. On this occasion one of the guests puts a small fish in a leaf-cup full of water, which no doubt represents the spirit of the deceased, and all the mourners touch this cup and are freed from their impurity. A Brāhman is also invited, who lights a lamp fed with melted butter and then asks for a cow or some other valuable present as a recompense for his service of blowing out the lamp. Until this is done the Dhākars think that the soul of the departed is tortured by the flame of the lamp. If the Brāhman is pleased, he pours some curds over the lamp and this acts as a cooling balm to the soul. When a member of the family dies the mourners shave the whole head with beard and moustache.

4. Occupation and social status.

The Dhākars are mainly engaged in cultivation as farm-servants and labourers. Like the Halbas, they consider it a sin to heat or forge iron, looking upon the metal as sacred. They eat the flesh of clean animals, but abstain from both pigs and chickens, and some also do not eat the peacock. A man as well as a woman is permanently expelled for adultery with a person of lower caste, the idea of this rule being no doubt to prevent degradation in the status of the caste from the admission of the offspring of such unions. If one Dhākar beats another with a shoe, both are temporarily put out of caste. But if a man seduces a caste-man's wife and is beaten with a shoe by the husband, he is permanently expelled, while the husband is readmitted after a feast. On being received back into caste intercourse an offender is purified by drinking water in which the image of a local god has been dipped or the Rāja of Bastar has placed his toe. Like other low castes of mixed origin, they are very particular about each other's status and will only accept cooked food from families who are well known to them. At caste feasts each family or group of families cooks for

itself, and in some cases parents refuse to eat with the family into which their daughter has married and hence cannot do so with the girl herself.

1. Traditions and structure of the caste.

Dhangar.[1]—The Marātha caste of shepherds and blanket-weavers, numbering 96,000 persons in the Central Provinces and Berār. They reside principally in the Nāgpur, Wardha, Chānda and Nimār Districts of the Central Provinces and in all Districts of Berār. The Dhangars are a very numerous caste in Bombay and Hyderābād. The name is derived either from the Sanskrit *dhenu*, a cow, or more probably from *dhan*,[2] wealth, a term which is commonly applied to flocks of sheep and goats. It is said that the first sheep and goats came out of an ant-hill and scattering over the fields began to damage the crops of the cultivators. They, being helpless, prayed to Mahādeo to rescue them from this pest and he thereupon created the first Dhangar to tend the flocks. The Dhangars consequently revere an ant-hill, and never remove one from their fields, while they worship it on the Diwāli day with offerings of rice, flowers and part of the ear of a goat. When tending and driving sheep and goats they ejaculate 'Har, Har,' which is a name of Mahādeo used by devotees in worshipping him. The Dhangars furnished a valuable contingent to Sivaji's guerilla soldiery, and the ruling family of Indore State belong to this caste. It is divided into the following subcastes: Varādi or Barāde, belonging to Berār; Kānore or Kānade, of Kanara; Jhāde, or those belonging to the Bhandāra, Bālāghāt and Chhindwāra Districts, called the Jhādi or hill country; Lādse, found in Hyderābād; Gādri, from *gādar*, a sheep, a division probably consisting of northerners, as the name for the cognate caste of shepherds in Hindustān is Gadaria; Telange, belonging to the Telugu country; Marāthe, of the Marātha country; Māhurai from Māhur in Hyderābād, and one or two others. Eleven subcastes in all are reported. For the purposes of marriage a number of exogamous groups or septs exist which may be classified according to their nomenclature as titular and totemistic, many having also the

[1] Compiled mainly from a paper by Kanhya Lāl, clerk in the Gazetteer office.
[2] Cf. the two meanings of the word 'stock' in English.

names of other castes. Examples of sept names are: Powār, a Rājpūt sept; Dokra, an old man; Mārte, a murderer or slayer; Sarodi, the name of a caste of mendicants; Mhāli, a barber; Kaode, a crow; Chambhāde, a Chamār; Gūjde, a Gūjar; Juāde, a gambler; Lamchote, long-haired; Bodke, bald-headed; Khatīk, a butcher; Chāndekar, from Chānda; Dambhāde, one having pimples on the body; Halle, a he-buffalo; Moya, a grass, and others. The sept names show that the caste is a functional one of very mixed composition, partly recruited from members of other castes who have taken to sheep-tending and generally from the non-Aryan tribes.

2. Marriage.

A man must not marry within his own sept or that of his mother, nor may he marry a first cousin. He may wed a younger sister of his wife during her lifetime, and the practice of marrying a girl and boy into the same family, called Anta Sānta or exchange, is permitted. Occasionally the husband does service for his wife in his father-in-law's house. In Wardha the Dhangars measure the heights of a prospective bride and bridegroom with a piece of string and consider it a suitable match if the husband is taller than the wife, whether he be older or not. Marriages may be infant or adult, and polygamy is permitted, no stigma attaching to the taking of a second wife. Weddings may be celebrated in the rains up to the month of Kunwār (September), this provision probably arising from the fact that many Dhangars wander about the country during the open season, and are only at home during the rainy months. Perhaps for the same reason the wedding may, if the officiating priest so directs, be held at the house of a Brāhman. This happens only when the Brāhman has sown an offering of rice, called Gāg, in the name of the goddess Rāna Devi, the favourite deity of the Dhangars. On his way to the bride's house the bridegroom must be covered with a black blanket. Nowadays the wedding is sometimes held at the bridegroom's house and the bride comes for it. The caste say that this is done because there are not infrequently among the members of the bridegroom's family widows who have remarried or women who have been kept by men of higher castes or been guilty of adultery. The bride's female

relatives refuse to wash the feet of these women and this provokes quarrels. To meet such cases the new rule has been introduced. At the wedding the priest sits on the roof of the house facing the west, and the bride and bridegroom stand below with a curtain between them. As the sun is half set he claps his hands and the bridegroom takes the clasped hands of the bride within his own, the curtain being withdrawn. The bridegroom ties round the bride's neck a yellow thread of seven strands, and when this is done she is married. Next morning a black bead necklace is substituted for the thread. The expenses of the bridegroom's party are about Rs. 50, and of the bride's about Rs. 30. The remaining procedure follows the customary usage of the Marātha Districts. Widows are permitted to marry again, but must not take a second husband from the sept to which the first belonged. A considerable price is paid for a widow, and it is often more expensive to marry one than a girl. A Brāhman and the mālguzār (village proprietor) should be present at the ceremony. If a bachelor marries a widow he must first go through the ceremony with a silver ring, and if the ring is subsequently lost or broken, its funeral rites must be performed. Divorce is allowed in the presence of the caste *panchāyat* at the instance of either party for sufficient reason, as the misconduct or bad temper of the wife or the impotency of the husband.

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3. Religion.

Mahādeo is the special deity of the Dhangars, and they also observe the ordinary Hindu festivals. At Diwāli they worship their goats by dyeing their horns and touching their feet. One Bahrām of Nāchangaon near Pulgaon is the tutelary deity of the Wardha Dhangars and the protector of their flocks. On the last day of the month of Māgh they perform a special ceremony called the Deo Pūja. A Dhīmar acts as priest to the caste on this occasion and fashions some figures of idols out of rice to which vermilion and flowers are offered. He then distributes the grains of rice to the Dhangars who are present, pronouncing a benediction. The Dhīmar receives his food and a present, and it is essential that the act of worship should be performed by one of this caste. In their houses they have Kul-Devi

and Khandoba the Marātha hero, who are the family deities. But in large families they are kept only in the house of the eldest brother. Kul-Devi or the goddess of the family is worshipped at weddings, and a goat is offered to her in the month of Chait (March). The head is buried beneath her shrine inside the house and the body is consumed by members of the family only. Khandoba is worshipped on Sundays and they identify him with the sun. Vithoba, a form of Vishnu, is revered on Wednesdays, and Bālāji, the younger brother of Rāma, on Fridays. Many families also make a representation of some deceased bachelor relative, which they call Munjia, and of some married woman who is known as Mairni or Sāsin, and worship them daily.

4. Birth, death and social status.

The Dhangars burn their dead unless they are too poor to purchase wood for fuel, in which case burial is resorted to. Unmarried children and persons dying from smallpox, leprosy, cholera and snake-bite are also buried. At the pyre the widow breaks her bangles and throws her glass beads on to her husband's body. On returning from the burning *ghāt* the funeral party drink liquor. Some gānja, tobacco and anything else which the deceased may have been fond of during his life are left near the grave on the first day. Mourning is observed during ten days on the death of an adult and for three days for a child. Children are usually named on the twelfth day after birth, the well-to-do employing a Brāhman for the purpose. On this day the child must not see a lamp, as it is feared that if he should do so he will afterwards have a squint. Only one name is given as a rule, but subsequently when the child comes to be married, if the Brāhman finds that its name does not make the marriage auspicious, he substitutes another and the child is afterwards known by this new name. The caste employ Brāhmans for ceremonies at birth and marriage. They eat flesh including fowls and wild pig, and drink liquor, but abstain from other unclean food. They will take food from a Kunbi, Phūlmāli or a Sunār, and water from any of the good cultivating castes. A Kunbi will take water from them. The women of the caste wear bracelets of lead or brass on the right wrist and glass bangles on the left. Permanent or temporary excommunication from caste

is imposed for the usual offences, and among those visited with the minor penalty are selling shoes, touching the carcase of a dog or cat, and killing a cow or buffalo, or allowing one to die with a rope round its neck. No food is cooked for five weeks in a house in which a cat has died. The social standing of the caste is low.

5. Occupation.

The traditional occupation of the Dhangars is to tend sheep and goats, and they also sell goats' milk, make blankets from the wool of sheep, and sometimes breed and sell stock for slaughter. They generally live near tracts of waste land where grazing is available. Sheep are kept in open and goats in roofed folds. Like English shepherds they carry sticks or staffs and have dogs to assist in driving the flocks, and they sometimes hunt hares with their dogs. Their dress consists frequently only of a loin-cloth and a blanket, and having to bear exposure to all weathers, they are naturally strong and hardy. In appearance they are dark and of medium size. They eat three times a day and bathe in the evening on returning from work, though their ablutions are sometimes omitted in the cold weather.

1. Original and classical records.

Dhānuk.—A low caste of agriculturists found principally in the Narsinghpur District, which contained three-fourths of the total of nearly 7000 persons returned in 1911. The headquarters of the caste are in the United Provinces, which contains more than a lakh of Dhānuks. The name is derived from the Sanskrit *dhanuska*, an archer, and the caste is an ancient one, its origin as given in the Padma Purāna, quoted by Sir Henry Elliot, being from a Chamār father and a Chandāl or sweeper mother. Another pedigree makes the mother a Chamār and the father an outcaste Ahīr. Such statements, Sir H. Risley remarks in commenting on this genealogy,[1] serve to indicate in a general way the social rank held by the Dhānuks at the time when it was first thought necessary to enrol them among the mixed castes. Dr. Buchanan[2] says that the Dhānuks were in former times the militia of the country. He states that all the Dhānuks

[1] *Tribes and Castes of Bengal*, art. Dhānuk.

[2] *Eastern India*, i. 166, as quoted in Crooke's *Tribes and Castes*.